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SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY, 60 Fifth Ave., New York

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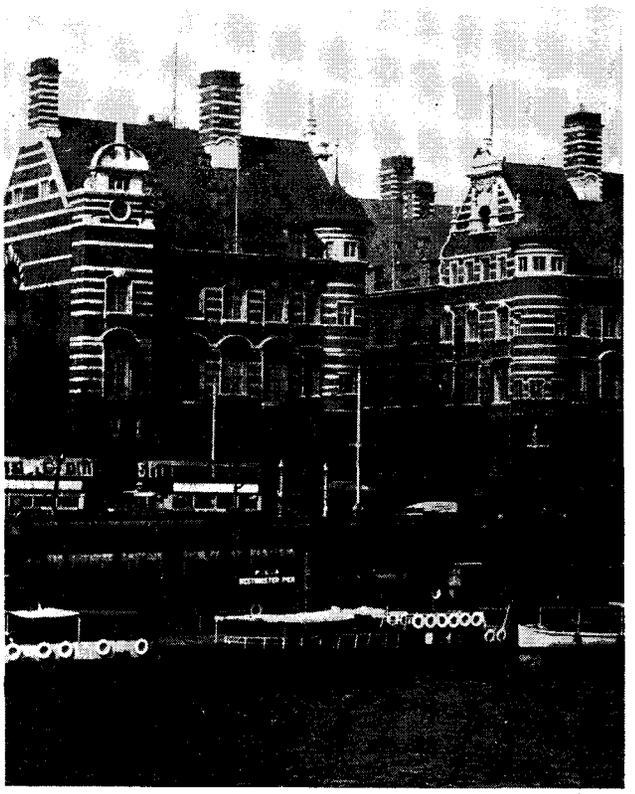
Murder for Pastime

BY KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

IT is an amusing fact that no form of fiction is subjected to such rigid standards of criticism, by its admirers, as the detective story. Not long ago, two academic gentlemen were discussing, in my presence, the requirements of the genre. While my prejudices marched, most of the way, with theirs, I thought these addicts went too puristically far: their demands would have dried up the supply. I believe the only detective story that completely satisfied both of them was "Death Stalks at East Repps," by Francis Beeding. They found fault even with "Murder Gone Mad" and "Whose Body?" In addition to what I should call the essentials, these critics required all sorts of "extras." They must have distinction of setting, of atmosphere, of style. The principal characters must be attractive. (I know one university dean who requires that only nice people shall be murdered.) There must be no love interest. The author must absolutely eschew sensationalism. Above all, the crime must take place in England.



SCOTLAND YARD

The last demand brings us face to face with an interesting question. Any reader of detective stories knows that English detective stories are far better than American ones. In fact, most American detective stories are pretty poor, whereas England offers a dozen admirable practitioners of the type. We have only a few men and women, of uneven achievement, to set against Sayers, MacDonald, Christie, Bailey, Crofts, Freeman, the Coles, Connington, Fielding, Rhode, Bush, Walling, Frome, and the rest. There are plenty of bad English detective stories; but there are a lot of authors who will never let us down too badly. Why are the English so far ahead of us in this field?

The first and most obvious answer is that they write better. Let us pass over that fact—with due sighs. The second, more important, one is that English detective story writers know their type, and do their job, better than we do. The task of the detective story writer is to present us with a crime mysteriously committed, and then to proceed by logical steps to a solution, playing fair with the reader all the way. On the whole, English authors restrict themselves more conscientiously than we do to the processes of ratiocination—to use Poe's word. American writers are apt to stress incidentals; they try to amuse you, to make your flesh creep, to amaze you with Hollywoodish settings or batter you down with brutalities. This is what my friends mean when they accuse American writers of sensationalism. Though not one of these British writers has yet matched the fertility and ingenuity of Wilkie Collins, they follow, better than we do, the high precepts of Poe.

These fundamental facts my carping friends would, I am sure, admit. They like English detective stories better than American ones because they are better. Yet some of their stated preferences depend not wholly on English brains but on English luck. We may as well examine that luck; keeping in mind, always, that luck is not the main thing.

When, for example, an addict tells me he must have Scotland Yard on the job, how far is he within his rights? Is he demanding something essential, or is he asking for glamor? Both, I fancy; though it is difficult to disentangle these matters. It would be absurd to say that Scotland Yard is necessary to a good detective story—what about "The Chinese Parrot," and "The Desert Moon Mystery," and "S. S. Murder"? Yet, beyond question, Scotland Yard is a partial guarantee. English legal procedure, I think we may say, pyramids better than its equivalent on this side of the ocean. Inquests, to begin with, are apparently always managed in the same way, and it seems to be a more serious and dignified way than ours. While there may be dull P. C.'s in rural parts, above the local police are always a superintendent and a chief constable, of superior intelligence and training. When even the latter decide to call in the Yard—they usually do, for a crime really worth our notice—we can put up our feet and begin to enjoy ourselves. For whether the crime is committed in Devon, Shropshire, or East Anglia, the Yard is always the same. The author does not have to bother with the vagaries of district attorneys or the difference in the criminal procedure of the several states. This, indeed—something very different from glamor—is the true explanation of the superiority, for the detective story, of English settings in general. It is not (we cannot make this too clear) the esthetic value of time-worn towns and cathedral closes and Jacobean manors that makes them the preferable background for crime: it is the fact that, like Scotland Yard, they need no explaining. In England, all categories are clearer. A castle is a castle, a vicarage is a vicarage, a pub is a pub. Enough said. Whatever

(*Continued on next page*)

Next Week

VACHEL LINDSAY
By EDGAR LEE MASTERS

FOR AUTHORS ONLY
By KENNETH ROBERTS
Reviewed by Henry Seidel Canby

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R. AUSTIN FREEMAN

interest sectionalism may create for other fiction, for the detective story it can be only a drawback. The social background, the legal set-up that we can take for granted, are a vast help to the author.

For it cannot be too emphatically stated that, since the interest of the detective story is purely intellectual, we do not wish to be harassed and interrupted by esthetic, or social, or psychological considerations. The Macbeths must not overshadow Duncan. When we read a detective story, we are, as nearly as possible, all brain. We do not care whether the crime was committed by a countess or a cook. We do not wish to sympathize with any one—even the corpse. I find nearly all American detective stories suffering from the obligation under which the author feels himself to sophisticate motives, to elaborate backgrounds, to complicate psychology. The true detective story is as impersonal as Euclid; it has nothing to do with morality or sentiment. Psychological analysis, even, should be limited to the establishing of motive, and the simpler the motive, the better. Nor do we like over-much description: a plan, a map, a diagram is what gives us pleasure. The very fact that both legal procedure and social habit vary in America from state to state and section to section, is apt to involve the American author in these moral and physical irrelevancies. He is also under a temptation, not suffered by the English writer, to bring in the professional criminal, the gangster, the underworld—all, red rags to the true fan, whose interest cannot be aroused by the professional murderer. Besides this, the "hard-boiled" tendency in current American literature has helped to corrupt the type. Many ill-informed people refer to Dashiell Hammett, for example, as a writer of detective stories, whereas any true fan knows that, as a detective story, "The Thin Man" was inferior to Edgar Wallace's worst.

Another thing that the settled civilization of England, and Scotland Yard in particular, have done for the English detective story is to protect it, in some measure, from that great menace, the amateur detective. It has become the fashion (started, one supposes, by the immortal Sherlock) to give the chief part of the adventure and the glory to some sleuth not of the police. We have no objection to the clever amateur, as long as he does not dominate the book. Sometimes, however, his idiosyncrasies, mannerisms, idioms, threaten to make his personality more emphatic than the problem, and eventually (as in the later Father Brown stories) the problem disappears and only the sleuth is left. The author must not, slighting his high task, take refuge behind any character. Even the most ardent Freeman fans are becoming afraid of Dr. Thorndyke, and it takes all the ingenuity of Agatha Christie to make one put up with Hercule Poirot and his dreadful little gray cells. Reggie Fortune's wails begin to grow tiresome. If we are untiringly faithful to Lord Peter Wimsey and Anthony Gethryn (though I fear the latter has now passed from the scene) it is because Dorothy Sayers and Philip MacDonald are such wise and deft practitioners that they show no sign, as yet, of featuring the sleuth at the expense of the central crime. For some of the best English authors (Crofts, for example) the Yard itself suffices. Though I am personally much attached to Lord Peter, and wish his shadow never to grow less, I confess I am pleased when an interesting crime is adequately solved by the police. But, whether or not we call in the brilliant investigator from outside, the Yard always helps, by its importance, intelligence, and immutability. Though the

DOROTHY SAYERS

H. C. BAILEY

clever amateur (we may dub all investigators amateurs, whatever their training and accomplishments, who are not officially connected with the police) may be wiser than inspectors and commissioners, he cannot treat Scotland Yard officials as a set of boobies. Any amateur in an American detective story may treat the police as a set of boobies, and readers will see no cause to be offended. The Yard is fit to be collaborated with, even by a Lord Peter or a Reggie Fortune; and that collaboration makes the pursuit of clues both a more dignified and a more exciting business. Also, it prevents the author from displaying his detective as the only intelligent person in a world of fools and letting him steal the show. Our Philo Vances, our Ellery Queens, our Asey Mayos tend to overshadow the books in which they appear, and in the end their affectations become more obvious than their brains. The problem shows the results of neglect; it is allowed to become thin, unconvincing, sensational, cheap—what you will. Charlie Chan, as far as I know, never obliterated his problem; but Earl Derr Biggers is dead, leaving no adequate successor.

It has been my purpose to show that, if English detective stories are better than American ones, their superiority is not all a matter of luck. The English setting is not better, merely because of glamor. No writer has given us richer contexts of "state and ancientry" than the late J. S. Fletcher; and most addicts of my acquaintance have refused to read Fletcher for the last half-dozen years—in spite of his castles and his cloth-markets and his clerestories. They find his problems not sufficiently baffling, his solutions not sufficiently subtle. (Ungrateful carpers, they

(*Continued on page* 14)

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Clarence Day's Father

LIFE WITH FATHER. By Clarence Day, Jr. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1935. $2.

Reviewed by FRANCIS HACKETT

IMAGINE how exciting it would be if a book were to be found, containing thirty or forty vivid episodes, in which Montaigne sat down to tell us everything about his father. Not just old M. Montaigne related to the universe and browsing about among ideas, but related to his overborne wife, to his boys who had to learn the viol, to Marguerite his cook, to his town Bordeaux, to his vacations, to his horses, to his tapestries, to his food, his wine, his God. This would not be the philosopher philosophizing. It would be that supremely candid man telling us about something near to his heart. It could not be dutiful biography. It would be a feast of recollection and interpretation.

Old Mr. Day was a Wall Street broker of the past generation, and Clarence Day might possibly, in his dutiful youth, fresh from Yale, have written a brownstone biography of his father, filled with Parmlys, Johnsons, Ben Day, George Day. It would have been heavy going. But by divine accident Clarence Day lost his focus as a son of Eli and a son of Clarence. With no gross breach of tradition or even convention, the figure of his father has shifted just enough so that, remaining lovable and admirable and pretty terrible, he can be treated with insight: and a father who saw himself only as serious, whom others saw only as serious, who was serious, is now, to one's immense relief, allowed to be comic, with perfect fidelity to the importance of Wall Street and his family's loyal and pungent experience of him.

At the beginning, perhaps, in "Life with Father," there was a hint of monkey shines, of Clarence Junior squaring accounts with the Patriarchs. There was a touch of revolt in the first lines of that portrait. But very soon the pure delight of an artist in a beautiful subject took the upper hand, and before Clarence Day's memories had rolled into the first score of episodes we had a male parent so well seen, so round, so original and yet so truly in character, that the piquant biographical aspect gave completely away to the absolutely joyous recollection of a living man. He roars. He swears. He carries on. Yet he is not a humoristic subject, not a potted parent, but one of those justly perceived beings who brim with life, who override others by sheer exuberance, so intent on living that they never mirror the other mind or the other will, getting their own way by tactics often hugely infantile, triumphing by irrationality over all about them, unless a wife oppose them by another irrationality, this time feminine, or else a David come along with the sling of comedy and lay the giant low.

But this Father is not a stuffed tyrant, a tedious over-blown Patriarch. It is a palpable man, full of humors and attractiveness. At times the situations spring out so characteristically that the book convulses one with laughter. Old Mr. Day is not

CLARENCE DAY, JR.

only placed in his environment so as to make a convincing picture of a civilization, but the absurdities of that civilization break out when he behaves with irresistible naturalness. He is at times "pure act," like the late Thedore Roosevelt, and it is in this virile compulsion that the comedy consists, because of course poor little Clarence, the informant, is always acted upon by the overwhelming parent, and yet bobs up again after the hurricane, weak and resilient as grass. Old Mr. Day imposing music on Clarence is obviously funny. Clarence sees that, as Mark Twain might have seen it. But Clarence Senior opening Clarence Junior's letters and trying to fit the letters about false whiskers into the broker's life, Clarence Senior answering all telephone calls and trying to fit them to his measure, Clarence Senior revolting at his son's meekness about illness, refusing to have high blood pressure, declining to be killed —here is a richly amusing character, and when we understand him, when we admit the dreadful implications of the extravert Anglo-Saxon father, when the energy of the father in having his own way, in making Irvington give him ice, or the slow agency give him a cook, becomes fully developed, then we surrender and revel in him, with occasional twinges of the executive male in ourselves.

The literary problem, with a rich topic like this, is to keep the easy accent of life. If the humor is savage we go into satire and if it is broad we go into farce. By confining his topic solely to the unit of the family and keeping it inside the polite limits of Madison Avenue in the eighties and nineties, Clarence Day has never forced his note. He has amusingly recreated that plump era, with lunch downtown at Delmonico's and horseback riding up at Irvington, with a grim attitude about debts and a visit to the Chicago World's Fair. It is all candid and real, but Clarence Day is not the sort of realist who opens the vacuum cleaner for his material. He is an *enfant terrible,* but not an *enfant gaté.* And what he pours out is abundantly enjoyed, ripe in experience and feeling.

Those of us who have watched every scrap of his work for the past twenty years know that there is in him something of the musing wisdom of Montaigne. Like Montaigne he has kept inquisitiveness, the active principle of wonder, while shedding every speck of myth-making, all the delight in bubble-blowing and dreaming that turns wonder into poetry at one end and into delusion and nonsense at the other. When he has let his imagination loose, as in his drawings, it has sometimes been rough stuff, with a kind of resistance against myth-making in it. It is the side of him that is not reconciled, and its force is rude. But Clarence Day is full of social tact and experience and feeling, of dry awareness and peculiar wise insight. What he needed was a medium where he could release all of himself without fabricating, and his father has given it to him. Here his comedy could have the dignity and warmth that his social instinct craves. It could have a simple style, like old Margaret's cooking, and be fertile and informal, just as American as Jane Austen is English, with everything honestly to scale. It could be democratic in the early sense, unpretentious and yet individualistic. All of this he has secured, in this quiet, abundant, warm, and devilish revelation of his father. So the book is a feast.

Mr. Hackett, critic and biographer, is the author of "Henry VIII" and "Francis I."

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So Red the Red

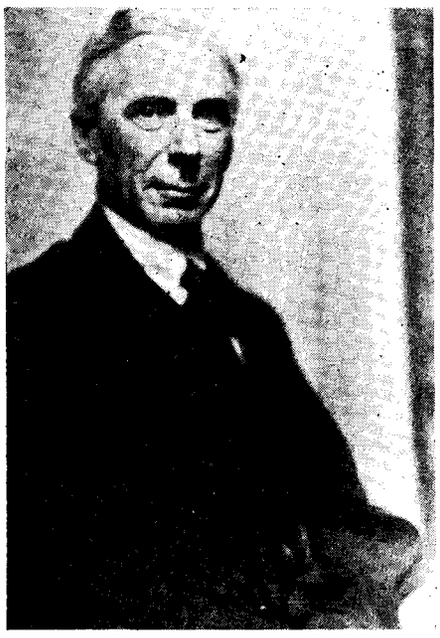
THE INTELLIGENTSIA OF GREAT BRITAIN. By Dmitri Mirsky. New York: Covici-Friede. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST BOYD

IN 1919, at the ripe age of twenty-nine, Prince D. S. Mirsky, under the ægis of General Denikin, was fighting in the noble cause of international capitalism against the Red armies of the U. S. S. R. Three years later he was in London and had become Lecturer in Russian Literature at King's College, University of London. He contributed articles on Russian literature to the *London Mercury* and in 1925 wrote for the Oxford University Press a manual of "Modern Russian Literature," from which he managed to exclude any discussion of the Russian Revolution of 1917 in its relation to the intellectual life of Russia. A year later he was commissioned by a New York publisher to write "Contemporary Russian Literature," which was dedicated to that petty bourgeois Maurice Baring, and contained a preface expressing the author's indebtedness to his Russophil English friends, such as Dr. Hagbert Wright of the London Library, Sir Bernard Pares, and Miss Jane E. Harrison. Now the Ci-devant, having seen the light of Russian Marxism, pays his compliments to his English friends in "The Intelligentsia of Great Britain," a work which, unlike those previously mentioned, is described as a "translation" by Alec Brown.

When that distinguished and witty scholar Miss Jane Harrison corrected the English of "Contemporary Russian Literature," she did better, in her social-fascist way, by the Ci-devant than his new translator. Before quoting some typical specimens of the style in which "The Intelligentsia of Great Britain" is written, I should like to cite the author's own description of Bolshevik literature, as it impressed him before his conversion, and as it must still impress those of us who have not embraced the True Faith of Russian Marxism. "As a whole," he writes, "it is difficult reading, written in a party jargon which is unintelligible to the reader unless he is himself well versed in Marxism. It is intensely dogmatic and authority plays in it a far greater part than free inquiry—the Marxist is as devoted to authority as ever a medieval Schoolman was." Whereupon he proceeds to dismiss Trotsky—whose highly reasonable "Literature and Revolution" would save some of our local proletarian critics from their proselyte folly—because his work is "disfigured by the usual Bolshevik jargon," and disposes of Lunacharsky as a "third-rate provincial schoolmaster with a dash of the journalist." Needless to say, the party jargon smudges every page of "The Intelligentsia of Great Britain," but in addition the book contains gems of English hitherto unobserved by me either in the works of the Ci-devant himself or in those of Trotsky and Lunacharsky. For example:

"Churchman after churchman liberal in matter of their conception of life"; "An anglo-catholic togged out in skirts and wot not"; "A sense of discipline to their class"; "This we see right back with the classical economists"; "Far from doing anything so unpleasant as take on leadership of thought"; "Condemned to occupy itself in weak fingering with its paralytic fingers a number of arbitrarily selected abstractions"; "Makes it exemplary of scientific approach."



BERTRAND RUSSELL

This unbelievable jargon is not relieved by the pedantic arrogance which seems to be inseparable from Marxist literary criticism. All that the Ci-devant heavy-handedly demonstrates is that British liberals are not—what they never professed to be—Russian Marxists. Even so venerable and life-long admirer of Marx as Bernard Shaw fails to find favor in the author's eyes, apparently for no earthly reason, except that he worked with the Fabian Society and has written some amusing plays. John Strachey is reluctantly admitted into the fold, but great stress is laid upon the "bourgeois roots" of his communist faith. J. M. Keynes, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, G. D. H. Cole, Lytton Strachey, and Aldous Huxley have all made the mistake of advocating and working for human liberty while the Ci-devant was fighting with those intent upon destroying the work of the 1917 revolution.

Chesterton is taken to task because in 1905 he welcomed the uprising against Czarism, but did not then foresee the Bolshevist revolution. There is no account whatsoever of the Marxist movement in England during the eighties and nineties, obviously because this would entail the admission that Fabian Socialism was the only possible means of attack, Hyndman and the Social Democratic Federation having completely failed to appeal to the working classes of England. The crime of the Fabians is that they had at heart "the interests of society as a whole," instead of those of the proletariat exclusively. The mere fact that the proletariat never did widely respond to the Marxism of Hyndman and his party, whereas immense gains for the workers were achieved by the Fabians and the Liberals, does not disturb the proletarian complacency of the Ci-devant. With typical class snobbery he appears to take for granted that the "working classes" means only those whose labor is manual.

The author, of course, was a child in Czarist Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it is not surprising

Pinchot

ALDOUS HUXLEY

that he knows little or nothing of the intellectual life of London at the time. Thus, he labors under the delusion that "imperialism," *i.e.*, the Boer War, was popular with the intelligentsia, just as he has the audacity to say that Shaw's "Common-sense about the War" exactly expressed the point of view of the British governing classes in 1914. It is, likewise, downright ignorance to say that "black-hundred gangs in Ireland began to prepare civil war against the autonomists" in 1913-14. Here the pre-war anti-Home Rule agitation is confused with the Black and Tan activities nine years later. Nothing could be unfairer to Wells than to speak of his "complete inability to see further than his nose, his complete incapacity for generalisation, and the complete absence of any kind of conception of history as a whole." If there are three Wellsian characteristics they are the ability to do precisely those three things. His forecasts may be as erroneous as his generalisations, and his con-

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G. D. H. COLE

ception of history may be false, but in all three respects his abilities are self-evident.

Even the stars in their courses do not escape the eagle eye of Russian Marxism. The Ci-devant actually talks about "capitalistic astronomy"! Because Jeans and Eddington have certain religious beliefs, their astronomical researches are vitiated. If Wells had not mocked at Marx's beard, he might have been given more credit for his "Outline of History." Has his angry critic, I wonder, ever read Shaw's witty dissertation on the beards of Marx and Hyndman? But poor G. B. S. it out of date, a "deity-fabricating" mystic, who has never done anything but turn profitable paradoxes, despite the plain fact that he was a convinced Marxist fifty years ago, and has given his blessing to the present Russian régime. It is as hard to enter the Russian Marxist fold as to qualify as an "Aryan" Hitlerite. Abject submission is the essence of these dictatorships, whether proletarian or otherwise. The Ci-devant's quarrel with the British intelligentsia is that they have not yet surrendered to any dogma.

Ernest Boyd is an Irish critic and journalist who now lives in America.

Willa Cather Returns to the Middle West

LUCY GAYHEART. By Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1935. $2.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE American novel is in danger of becoming a prose pamphlet. Mr. Dreiser has employed it as an instrument to prove that we live like carnivora; Mr. Lewis has used it to show that we live like fools; Mr. Hemingway and Mr. Faulkner have written to indicate on the one hand that life is futile and cruel, and on the other hand that it doesn't make any difference anyway. Seduced by the plausible simplicities of what they regard as Marxian doctrine, a younger group is striving to transform the novel into a sociological treatise with fictional attachments. Being what it is, the most hospitable, the most Protean of literary forms, the novel has lent itself to all these didactic purposes, but in so doing, though it has made technical advances, it has failed to enrich itself artistically. It is an obvious truth, wrote Henry James, that "the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer. In proportion as that intelligence is fine will the novel . . . partake of the substance of beauty and truth. To be constituted of such elements is, to my vision, to have purpose enough." It is the special glory of Miss Cather to have the quality of mind which, to the highest kind of criticism, is purpose enough. If others, in the strong language of Scripture, go whoring after strange gods, she has held to the simple and perdurable principle that the primary business of the novelist is to create a work of art, which, arising out of human experience, returns through the long arc of the writer's shaping power, to enrich human experience. "Lucy Gayheart" is such a book.

The two qualities of Miss Cather's fine intelligence which especially appear in "Lucy Gayheart" (not that they are absent from her other works) are her intuitive insight into the most opposite personalities, and the perfection and beauty of her style. In it she returns to the Middle West—to Nebraska and Chicago—for the scenes and characters of her latest fiction. The plot is of the slightest. A young, impulsive music teacher, who might marry the son of the local banker in Haverford on the Platte, goes to Chicago, falls in love with a middle-aged singer, whose affection for her is half lover-like, half avuncular, and repulses the banker's son with the spontaneous lie that she has gone "all the way" with the musician. The banker's son marries a more practical-minded woman and turns from Lucy when she needs him; the singer is drowned because of the elfin selfishness of his regular accompanist, and Lucy returns to Haverford where, at length resolving that her life has been enriched, not ruined, by her loss, she is herself accidentally drowned. The banker, too late, realizes what he missed.

Thus detailed, the story is of the most ordinary. But when did any one ever read Miss Cather for the "plot"? A novelist less skilled would have created a sentimental romance; a novelist less wise would have satirized the singer, the heroine, and the stuffy little town; a novelist less humane would have denounced bourgeois morals and sent his heroine off on a career of hard-boiled episodes. Miss Cather does none of these things. Unlike George Sand, she is never maudlin; unlike Charlotte Brontë, she is never melodramatic. She holds the disparate elements of her story together through the unity of the heroine's life and through her experienced and disciplined prose. The little episode is told in a mood of sympathetic retrospection, but without denunciation, without nostalgia, without sentimentality. Only the coda, in which we are asked to believe that the banker's son keeps the Gayheart house as a sentimental souvenir, is momentarily touched with falseness. Elsewhere Miss Cather is, as she usually is, miraculously right.

Stylistically, Miss Cather is the most classical of contemporary novelists. The simplicity of her style would be austere, except that it is informed with delicate verbal and emotional beauty. She is incapable of writing a false or blundering sentence. Wiser than most of her contemporaries, she knows that sentiment is not to be confused with sentimentality; and as a consequence her pathos, like her lyricality, is never forced, but always sincerely felt and adequately, because economically, written. It is only in the larger strategy of structure that she occasionally fails—seldom in the smaller tactics of situation or scene. She shows us what the novel can be, and what it so seldom is, a flexible artistic form productive of a rich esthetic experience.

Howard Mumford Jones is professor of English at the University of Michigan.

Thirteenth Year

By ALFRED KREYMBORG

SHE isn't quite as easy as she looks.
Living with her is not all honey either.
Living with me and all my running brooks
Might well confound an ordinary diver.
To me she's more than merely beautiful.
And she can see beyond my egoism.
Never a move of hers is dutiful,
And I am not the man to run a prison.

We've made a kind of modulated being:
A musical whose dissonance is dear.
And we are not the man and wife for seeing
The way to reason why our love is clear.
We haven't the time to seek a definition
For things that blindly find their own fruition.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Debunking the Nightingale

FOR years we have sought an opportunity to check up on the nightingale, and found it at last in the elm woods that Wellington planted on the slopes of the Alhambra, and under the plane trees of Greece.

The nightingale of fame is a literary creation. The real bird has been belied. Reputable American poets still describe the lark as soaring and singing above New England pastures, and carry on the false tradition that the nightingale is the spokesman of a broken heart, the nightingale that they have never heard, and which cannot sing as well as native songsters they should have heard. This is enough to make nationalism ruffle its feathers. But it is the English poets who are chiefly guilty.

The nightingale of literature is subjective. In the Greek legend, being Philomela, she sang with her breast against a thorn, and so she has sung in the ears of Greek-read poets ever since.

> "Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
> What triumph! Hark!—what pain!"

Nonsense! Matthew Arnold had been reading Greek poetry with his windows tight shut.

> "Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
> I have been half in love with easeful Death."

The truth is that Keats would have been equally melancholy if a cuckoo had called while he wrote.

> "O Philomela fair, O take some gladness."

Sidney's line is beautiful but quite false, as false as Bridges's reference to a "dark nocturnal secret." This is all subjective natural history. Only two English poets, so far as we are aware, have written truth of the nightingale, and they are, as one might expect, almost the only two really great poets who seldom or never lose their common sense—Shakespeare and Wordsworth. If the nightingale, said Shakespeare, sang when "every goose is cackling" he would rate no higher than a wren, which is true in intention, if an overstatement. And Wordsworth recognized the cheerful "tumultuous harmony" of the nightingale's song—

> "as if the God of wine
> Had helped thee to a Valentine."

One should add to these poet-naturalists the many song writers, medieval and Renaissance, who make their birds sing "jug, jug." The nightingale is the only bird we have ever heard say "jug, jug" as a matter of habit, but she says it with an umlaut, "jüg, jüg."

The truth is that the nightingale is a merry, careless bird, a free singer delighting in new sequences of phrases, capable of golden notes, seldom (unlike the mockingbird) going in for modern dissonances, and always hearty, always exuberant. In pathos, in range of emotions the mockingbird naturally excels her because, as his name implies, he will drag in any sound of which he is capable, and Whitman was not false to nature in recalling from his song—

> "the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
> The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing."

There is more taste in the nightingale's song, more restraint, a richer note, though, as Edward Bok's experiment with nightingales in Florida proved, this richness the mockingbird easily imitates and adds to his repertoire. And if the night song of the mockingbird has had no such rewards in poetry as the "liquid notes that close the eye of day" of his rival, it is because "nightingale" is a beautiful word that will put music in any line of verse.

But the special qualities which the closet poets attribute to the nightingale are to be heard in the song of another bird three thousand miles away from the nearest Philomela. Music, truly of eternal passion, eternal pain, but etherealized into sounds of a stellar beauty, an aerial whisper of far-off unhappy things remembered in tranquillity, and a voice which might be from another world since it cannot be imitated, belong to our hermit thrush, who indeed is worthy of the legend that has befuddled the admirers of the nightingale. Restraint, that Greek virtue, is hers, for she sings only three lengthy phrases, one heaven high, one in the golden mean, one low and passionate, but those three phrases are subtly varied, sometimes from moment to moment, and always between thrush and thrush. The quiet forest, dusk which is so much more beautiful than night, solitude which is her métier, make a background for a song which would have set poets romancing long before this if her name had been as euphonious as "nightingale." Yet the song itself assuredly equals the most extravagant claims of the poets for the nightingale. If not half in love with easeful death, it bears, in a solution of sounds, of which the purest are silver and gold, those translunary things which it is the business of art to create and if not to create to recapture. If Philomela was made a bird at all, it is the hermit thrush she inhabits, but that is an alien story. Some purest ray serene touching the evolving throat of a primordial bird still vibrates in the triple fall of the thrush's song.

As for the nightingale, we grant it the voice of jocund day, when

> Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
> Trees did grow and plants spring,

a mellow throat, a hearty jüg, jüg, a merry tiriddle, soft phrases of affection to which night, for one disposed that way, may give a plaintive cast. We concede a sense of a pattern which the wasteful mockingbird lets go as its pleasure mounts, and a nice care for modulation like the English speech of a London intellectual. But Arnold's "wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-world pain" throbbed in the temples of the poet. For him nature was always literary. But what a glorious line would Wordsworth have consecrated to the hermit thrush! There is too much Yankee in Robert Frost to hear her aright, too little romance in the modern Americans, who are with few exceptions cockneys anyhow when it comes to matter of this sort. Poe was too literary, Emerson too plain, Whitman too gross. Perhaps in a decade when "but to think is to be full of sorrow" the hermit thrush in poetry would quickly lose her ethereal detachment from "the weariness, the fever, and the fret"; so let her sing her own song there in the still unravished forest. The hungry generations, now frightened and greedy, are too busy treading on their own toes to bother about a bird.

Ten Years Ago

In the issue of August 1, 1925, *The Saturday Review* recommended, with certain reservations, "Thunderstorm" by G. B. Stern. The reviewer, A. Hamilton Gibbs, described the novel as a "*charmingly written episode of English life in Italy*" and "*a source of undiluted joy—or nearly so.*" Admirers of Miss Stern's Matriarch and this grand old lady's numerous cosmopolitan family, should not miss "Shining and Free," the latest of the series which was published early this Spring.

Today

The Saturday Review recommends these new books:

LIFE WITH FATHER. By Clarence Day.. See review on page 5.

PRESIDENT MASARYK TELLS HIS STORY. By Karel Capek. See review on page 10.

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Letters to the Editor: *Will Durant Replies to James H. Breasted*

Interpreting the Orient

SIR:—Professor Breasted's review of my "Story of Civilization" was a wholesome medicine for the ego. It is evident that in the course of a thousand pages on thirty centuries of cultural history in Egypt and Asia I have made some serious errors of detail which would have been avoided by a specialist with a lifetime to devote to a segment of this subject. The criticism seems justified, except, perhaps, in the following particulars.

(1) "We are told regarding *early* Egypt," writes Dr. Breasted, "that 'on land goods were transported by human muscle, later by donkeys, *later* by the horse" (italics are mine); while in fact the horse was not used for transport in Egypt until the Christian era. The Doctor has here unintentionally inserted the word *early* into my statement; without this emendation the statement remains so true that it is verified by the correction.

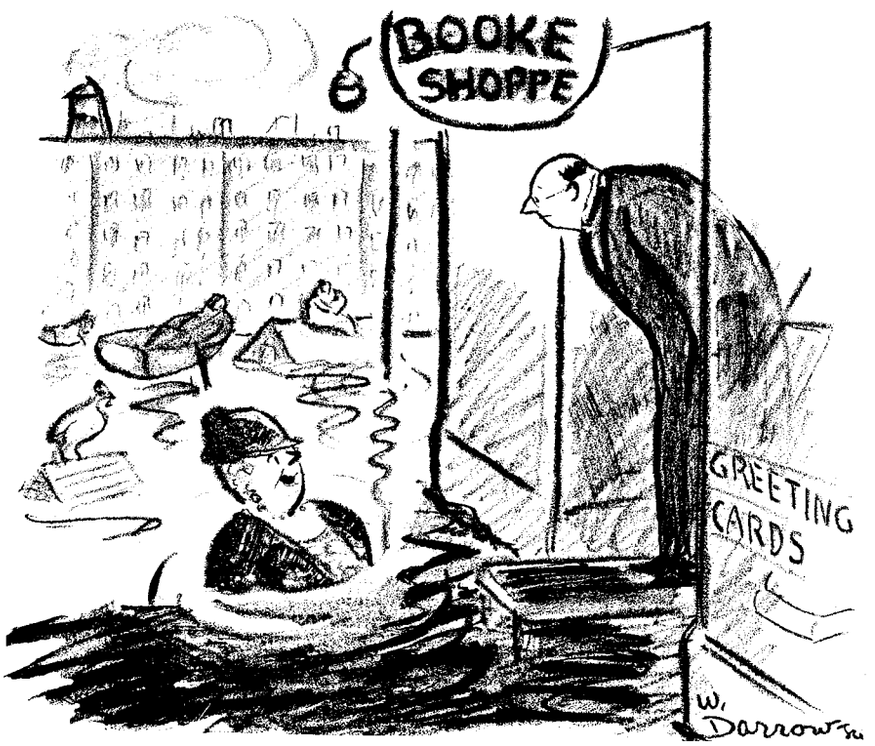
(2) Dr. Breasted suspects me of having "drawn heavily" on Herman Schneider. Schneider has given me very little, and has influenced me not at all. I owe far more to Breasted.

(3) The Doctor corrects my inaccurate remark about "our oldest historical reference to cotton in Herodotus" by quoting these words from an inscription of Sennacherib's, 700 B.C.: "Trees that bear fleeces they sheared, and they shredded it for garments." On page 274 of my book is this passage: "A tablet of Sennacherib, ca. 700 B.C., contains the oldest known reference to cotton: 'The tree that bore wool they clipped, and shredded for cotton.'"

(4) Correcting my statement that a certain tomb took the "form of a colonnade built into the mountain side," Dr. Breasted urges that "the entire tomb is hewn into the rock of the mountain side" (which is precisely what I thought I was saying), "and contains no built masonry whatever."

(5) "An historical estimate of Ramses II is summed up in the phrase, 'one of the most fascinating figures in history.'" Pages 213-14 of the book give a 400-word summary of the character and achievement of Ramses II, and the phrase quoted is merely a casual reference in another context.

(6) The doctor believes that my description of the diorite head of Khafre "fails entirely to discern its essential quality—the divine immobility of the pyramid-builder's visage, which expresses the sculptor's conception of a great king exalted far above any betrayal of human feeling." My description of the statue (p. 148) included these words: "On his head is the falcon, symbol of the royal power; but even without that sign we should know that he was every inch a king. Proud, direct, fearless, piercing eyes; a powerful nose, and a frame of reserved and quiet strength; it is evident that nature had long since learned how to make men, and art had long since learned how to represent them." In view of this passage, and the detailed descriptions of the Sheik-el-Beled and the Louvre Scribe, it is perhaps rather severe to speak of my neglecting the individual qualities of Egyptian statuary.



"HAVE YOU 'FOERSTWAENGEL ON FLOOD CONTROL'?"

(7) On the strength of my remark that the Egyptian calendar, by the addition of intercalary days, was brought into "harmony with the river and the sun," Dr. Breasted attributes to me the notion that this calendar was based upon the sun and its revolutions, while in fact, says the Doctor, it was based upon a stellar year, measured by the annual reappearance of the star Sirius. My text (p. 181) reads: "As the beginning of their year they chose the day on which the Nile usually reached its height, and on which, originally, the great star Sirius rose simultaneously with the sun. Since their calendar allowed only 365, instead of 365¼, days to a year, this 'heliacal rising' of Sirius (*i.e.*, its appearance just before sunrise, after having been invisible for a number of days) came a day later every four years; and in this way the Egyptian calendar diverged by six hours from the actual calendar of the sky," *i.e.*, the text bases the Egyptian calendar upon the star Sirius, and not upon the sun. On the same page a footnote of 200 words explains in detail the dependence of this calendar upon the behavior of Sirius.

(8) "There is no account of the extraordinary scientific work of the Chaldean astronomers of Babylon," says the Doctor. Pages 256-7 offer 800 words on this subject.

(9) Dr. Breasted considers it a serious omission that my book says nothing about the antiquity and continuity of astronomic records in Babylonia, and the Babylonian discovery of the precession of the equinoxes. He will find both of these achievements explicitly noted on page 257.

(10) In speaking of the Moslems of Cairo I called them Moors. I should have called them Arabs, says the Doctor. Webster gives, as the second meaning of the word *Moor*, the following definition: "A Mohammedan of one of the native North African races, or of the immigrant Arabs settled in North Africa." When errors of such immensity are sedulously gathered together to destroy a decade's work I can only marvel at the *odium literarium* that so saddens the life of authors.

(11) Professor Breasted believes that my discussion of the invention of movable type is based upon an outline history of China. A glance at the authorities referred to by the raised numbers (14-16) in this passage (pp. 729-30) will make it clear that the discussion is based mainly upon Carter's authoritative work, *The Invention of Printing in China, and Its Spread Westward.*

(12) The Doctor complains that I have relied too much upon secondary sources. I am not sure that the criticism is quite merited. The Doctor must remember that I am trying to write not a series of specialist monographs, but a philosophical survey and unification of the cultural history of mankind. Just as the speculative philosopher, seeking perspective in space, must turn to the scientist for facts, so the philosophical historian, seeking perspective in time, must rely upon the fact-gathering historian. To require a specialist's detailed knowledge, and an exclusive reliance upon original sources, of an au-

(*Continued on page* 18)

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Masaryk's Own Story

PRESIDENT MASARYK TELLS HIS STORY. Recounted by Karel Capek. Translated from the Czech. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1935. $2.50.

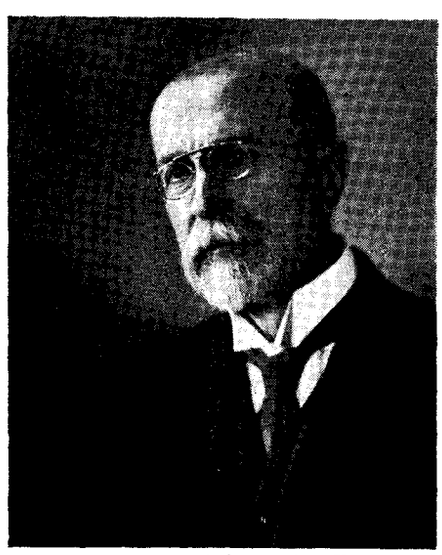
Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVIT

MASARYK of Czechoslovakia is beyond a doubt one of the seven Great Persons of the world in our time. I am not certain about the other six—pick them to suit yourself. I almost said "in all history," for I believe he would survive even on the larger canvas as one of the finest flowers of the human race. I have been trying to think of someone to place beside him as a compact of character, intellectual culture, physique, and achievement; but everybody else that occurs to me out of any time falls short in some aspect of the synthesis. He rates, as the saying is, with our own Washington as the Father of His Country, having risked his life—he had no fortune to risk—for and in its making against enemies more brutal than Washington dreamed of, and he trudged the world all but barefoot for its cause. He rates with Lincoln in the humbleness of his origin and the conquest of personal handicaps; but he has what Lincoln had not—complete wholesomeness and normality of psychology, and education in its completest sense. He rates with Thomas Jefferson as a fervent apostle of democracy; in respect of scholarship and cultured intelligence he is the peer and maybe the superior of Woodrow Wilson. He has the rugged honesty and moral courage of Cleveland and, six feet tall and an inveterate horseback rider, lacks nothing of Theodore Roosevelt's enthusiasm for and practice of physical development and love of nature, though Masaryk is not in any proper sense a naturalist as Roosevelt was. And withal his heart is as the heart of a little child. I have never met a person more completely without guile; yet with the native sense of humor enabling him to confess that in the underground business of conspiracy against Austria-Hungary he "tried not to lie any more than was necessary." In a word, I call Thomas Garrigue Masaryk a very great man.

On a sunny morning in October, 1929, I sat with him in a little rose-embowered arbor in the garden of the "summer White House" as they call it, at Topolcianky in southwestern Slovakia—not a great distance from where he was born in the village of Hodonín—while he told me with utmost simplicity and candor the story of his life, especially of his childhood and early manhood, larded with chuckling humor yet almost tense with the transparent sincerity which is his dominating characteristic. In English, mind you, for he is at home in that vernacular, speaking it with only the slightest "foreign" accent and inflection; his ample vocabularly only seasoned by occasional hesitation for exactly the apposite word. Remember, his wife was an American girl (of Danish and French descent), and English was the language in their home. He is at complete liberty in half a dozen languages (besides Latin).

His mother, a Slovak girl, worked as a cook in a German-speaking family, and he talked German with her; his father, a serf and a hostler, spoke only Slovak. Of his mother, by the way, he said to me,"She was a cook. A good cook. A *thinking* cook." It was she to whom he owes his devotion to learning.

Well, Karel Capek (pronounce him *Chuppuk*) was more fortunate than I, in that while I had a long morning in which to hear Masaryk tell his story, and ever shall count it one of the golden privileges of my life; he has sat at Masaryk's feet again and again over a period running into many months. "Anyone who knows how to read will find me between the lines of my books," Dr. Masaryk says, and undoubtedly here is his very self in Capek's devoted compilation. So you must find him here, too, for in this story no one but Masaryk is speaking—the author never intrudes with any comment or opinion. The narrative, which is minutely detailed as to experiences and happenings, is interwoven with Masaryk's matured views about every manner of thing, from marriage and sex to international coöperation; from his opinion of the Catholic church as carefully distinguished from its religion, to suffrage, socialism, suicide; and, of course, the opportunities before the president of a new republic. Constantly about education, the influence of the home, canalizing the hot zeal of youth still devoid of judgment yet bearing the promise of the future—Masaryk is more interested in education than in anything else. And he realizes the intricacy of the job. . . . "Man is a damned complicated and puzzling machine—and each man different!" And all the time appalled by the responsibility of the teacher. . . . "Yes, to teach a boy to read and write, hand out general knowledge to him, and explain what has already been discovered and written is a very different matter from assuming responsibility for the actions of those who listen to you, taking you as their example. . . ."



Underwood & Underwood

THOMAS G. MASARYK

Impressive, and disappointing, are the reticences. Not knowing already the harrowing facts, the reader of Masaryk's serene, unboasting, but intensely dramatic story of his odyssey during the war, would almost or quite miss the torture of four years of black silence between him and the sick wife who was light of his eyes; take too lightly the slight incidental allusion to his daughter Alice's imprisonment for nearly a year for his sake. When at last he returned to Prague politically triumphant it was to find his wife collapsed in body and spirit, a nervous wreck, all but dying. She lived but five years after that. Masaryk likes not to talk of these poignant things. Upon his marriage he assumed his wife's patronymic, "Garrigue" as his middle name. The only jewelry that he wears in his wedding-ring.

This probably is as near an autobiography as he ever will come. He has written notable books in various fields—mostly of the philosophy of history and politics—which he defines as "the conscious forming of people, the fashioning and transforming of real life"—but he says himself that he really does not like to write, even if once he did attempt a novel, and burn it, and there is his own "The Making of a State"; "Memories and Observations." About him are good biographies, such as Donald Lowie's admirable "Masaryk, Nation Builder."

The defects of this book are mostly superficial, including wasteful and sometimes irritatingly unnecessary repetitions of facts and events due to the overlapping of various conversations, the assumption that the reader is familiar with critical incidents only alluded to, and the omission of personal sufferings that Masaryk doesn't like to talk about. Nevertheless it is both delightful reading and notably important; an autobiography for which one may prophesy increasingly wide popularity and a long life.

John Palmer Gavit, formerly managing editor of the New York Evening Post *and a veteran reporter, visited Czechoslovakia in* 1929 *and wrote most of the special number of* Survey Graphic *of March* 1930, *issued to signalize the completion of the first decade of the new Czechoslovak republic. It included Mr. Gavit's extensive autobiographical interview with President Masaryk. Mr. Gavit is now an associate editor of* The Survey.

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Another "Apology for Idlers"

In the Light of Some New Stevenson Discoveries

BY EDWARD D. SNYDER

TO muse on the essay that Stevenson might have written has long been one of my favorite literary pastimes. In doing this I like to study the keen analysis that critics have made of Stevenson's use of paradox in such essays as "Aes Triplex," "Crabbed Age and Youth," and "An Apology for Idlers"—then to contemplate some other paradox and wonder just how he would have used it as the basis for an essay that exists only in the realm of Might-Have-Been.

The formula is well known: starting with some generally accepted piece of proverbial wisdom, Stevenson proceeds, between characteristic touches of the sublime and the ridiculous, to enlarge his definitions (of life and death, youth and age, business and idling) until the original proverb seems of doubtful accuracy; then with a torrent of brilliant illustrations he hurries on to demolish the proverb and actually to establish the converse.

It has been my good luck, only lately, to come across a number of things that fit together so neatly that I long to share them with other lovers of R. L. S. and of the Stevensonian paradox. If I cannot write in his style (who can?) I may at least show the plan, the illustrations, for "Another Apology for Idlers," in which my own "idling" gave a new interest to some little-known manuscripts and led to unexpected discoveries about Stevenson himself. But I am getting ahead of my story.

I had always been particularly attracted by the three essays I have mentioned because together they give us so much of Stevenson's own practical philosophy—his views on the relation of death to life, of cautious age to exuberant youth, and of a man's vocation to his avocations. One cannot study Stevenson's life without finding practical applications of the ideas set forth in these essays; one cannot read the essays without understanding immeasurably better the motives of his life. But the autobiographical significance of the "Apology for Idlers" is especially fascinating in view of Stevenson's own statement in a letter to Mrs. Sitwell that it "is really a defense of R. L. S." Let me linger a moment over the steps by which he ultimately establishes his paradoxical contention that idleness is more important than "busyness," and that the over-industrious fellow is such "an evil feature in other people's lives" that "they would be happier if he were dead."

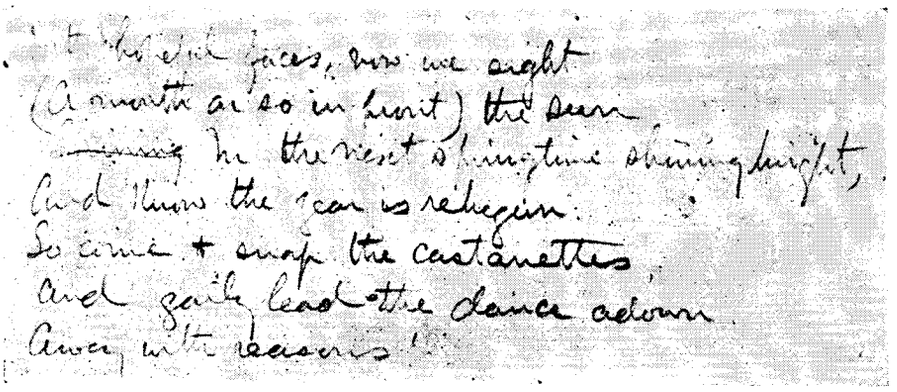
The "Apology for Idlers" begins with a quotation from Dr. Johnson—badly garbled, by the way, in the standard American editions of the essay—regarding the pleasure of idleness; then it hurries on to a definition of that word as Stevenson somewhat arbitrarily intends to use it: "Idleness, so called, which does not consist in doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognized in the dogmatic formularies of the ruling class. . . ." This use of the word is then gradually extended by illustration and implication until it includes practically all of one's pleasant avocations and pastimes. "Your truant may learn some really useful art: to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar—" but your industrious fellow, by the time he is forty, has "a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another" while he waits for a train. If he were only an idler! "Before he was breeched, he might have clambered on the boxes; when he was twenty, he would have stared at the girls—" but, alas, he has spent so much energy in "going for" the sixpenny pieces that now he has no eyes for anything else!

The body of the essay is extremely rich with contrasts between scraps of pedantic learning acquired by Stevenson in the class and the more valuable lore that he picked up in "the full, vivid, instructive hours of truancy." He still remembers that "Emphyteusis is not a disease, nor Stillicide a crime," but he sets less store by such information than by certain other things he learned in Chapter XXXIX of the Book of Life, which happens to be "hearing the band play in the gardens." (Emphyteusis? A system of land grants in Roman law—see Justinian's "Corpus Juris Civile." Stillicide? I searched the small dictionaries in vain for that word, but the large one informed me that it was neither more nor less than the regular dropping of water!) The essay reaches its emotional and intellectual climax in the brilliant passage beginning "There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy." Here Stevenson enlarges his plea for the value of cheerful idling and shows in matchless style the soundness, the glory, of his own view of life: "A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of goodwill; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted." This passage ends with the brilliant statement which is the very text of the whole essay: "*We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Liveableness of Life.*"

The forty-seventh proposition—oh, yes, the one about the sum of the squares on the legs of a right triangle being equal to the square on the hypotenuse—a stock example of a hard theorem to prove. For centuries it has been a stumbling block for schoolboys; even Chaucer slyly shows how it baffled both Cressida and Pandarus. It serves admirably for Stevenson's contrast between the irksome business of study and the jovial pleasures of idling. And it must serve again, this time as the climactic point, in the essay he might have written.

In contemplating the life of Stevenson and the lives of many other successful men, I have often been struck by the significance of another paradox, which, oddly enough, he never developed. He has made in the "Apology for Idlers" a distinction which we are all prone to make, yet which in many cases becomes meaningless—the distinction between the hours a youth spends in formal preparation for his supposed life work and the hours he spends on some favorite hobby. Now in many cases the idle pastime, the hobby, ultimately becomes the career. Hence what appeared to be "idling" becomes, in retrospect, "busyness," and *vice versa*. Paradoxical as it may seem, one can seldom say confidently to a youth of fifteen or even twenty: "Now you are busy at something important; an hour ago you were only idling."

Idling, myself, a few days ago—I trust in the true Stevensonian sense of the word—I was poring over three treasures of inestimable value which I had brought together for the delectation of some friends. All three of these treasures are the property of Haverford College: the Chemistry Notebook of Maxfield Parrish, Keats's im-



A PAGE FROM STEVENSON'S NOTEBOOK
Courtesy of the Haverford College Library

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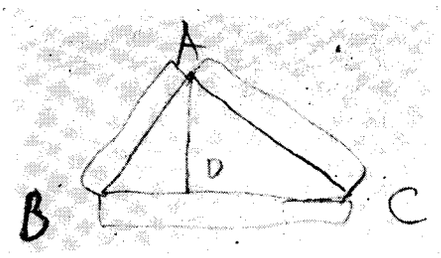

From Stevenson's Notebook

mortal love letter of October 13, 1819, to Fanny Brawne, and the Geometry Notebook of R. L. S. himself. As the Keats letter belongs in the Roberts Autograph Collection and the two Notebooks are ordinarily housed in the College Library, I realized that the three items had probably never before been assembled under the same roof, and much more certainly had never lain together on the same desk, or been carried, as I had just carried them, in the same briefcase. Gradually the three documents took on for me a new and striking interest: here, literally under my hand, were three perfect examples of the very paradox with which I had been idly toying. If Stevenson himself had hunted the world over for material to prove the paradox that the "*idleness*" of youth becomes the "business" of maturity, he could not have found documents more interesting in themselves or more apt as illustrations!

The Parrish Chemistry Notebook dates back to the last half of the artist's sophomore year at Haverford, when it was his "business" to study French, Latin, history, analytical geometry, and chemistry. He carried the first three subjects very well but almost sank under the analytical geometry. In chemistry he seems to have divided his time almost evenly between industry and idleness: the grade of sixty-eight suggests that he was not over-industrious, while the exquisite water-color illustrations in his Notebook give unmistakable evidence of hours on hours spent in delicious idling. On pages 40, 54, 57, 69, and 73 are to be found elves, dwarfs, and gnomes who support, at least pictorially, the various retorts and beakers used in the experiments. At pages 47 and 71 are two double-page illustrations of most fantastic sort, and some of the apparatus pictured is used to promote the regular dropping of water,—a happy coincidence in view of the remark of R. L. S. that he remembered stillicide was not a crime! Idling! But how well the idling of those sophomore days prepared for Parrish's success in his later career!

The Keats autograph letter to Fanny Brawne happens to be the very one which Matthew Arnold made the object of some singularly stupid strictures in his otherwise excellent essay on Keats. As an illustration of idling, the letter falls neatly into line with Stevenson's remark that an idler of twenty could at least "have stared at the girls"! We are inevitably reminded of the eagerness with which Keats began staring, in December, 1818, at the attractive sixteen-year-old brunette who lived next door to him. At just this time he was industriously engaged in writing a long, formal poem, "Hyperion," and for many months he divided his time between an idle flirtation with the girl he could never marry and the business of poetry. Paradoxically enough, many of the letters to Fanny proved to be of more lasting literary value than any selections of equal length from "Hyperion." Later, when the flirtation had developed into a very intense romance, "Hyperion" proved to be of but slight weight, and the scale, as Stevenson remarks, "fairly kicks the beam" when we consider the love poems that he wrote for Fanny's delight. Even when the hand of death pressed so heavily upon him that sustained poetic effort was impossible, he continued writing to her; and on one occasion, paraphrasing part of his letter in the form of sonnet, he achieved one of the finest short love poems in our language, "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art!"

Up to this point I had been enjoying the situation keenly enough but proceeding in an unmethodical, idle way. As I picked up the well-worn Geometry Notebook of R. L. S. himself, however, some impulse threw my "research" machinery into gear, and I suddenly began to function as a professional. I realized that no one had yet called attention in print to the fact that this Notebook, half filled with geometry and half with mathematics, might furnish the example *par excellence* of that great sentence in the "Apology for Idlers" which is the epitome of Stevenson's own genial philosophy: "We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Liveableness of Life."

Geometry, I reasoned, was a very important business to the lad Stevenson. Coming as he did from a family of engineers who had built lighthouses all along the treacherous coast of Scotland, he must have been under considerable pressure to "ply his book diligently." What I wanted—what anyone must want ——is evidence of the precise time in the boy's life when, working on that forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid, he sketched a diagram for the proof, looked out of the window perhaps, and then leaving the theorem unproved, turned the page and began idly writing verses. Such a page would foreshadow the entire course of Stevenson's life: the grim Scottish regard for duty giving way to the mellow interest in speaking "with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men." The ravages of tuberculosis held in check by that buoyancy of spirits which comes to every man who becomes a really successful idler. The momentous decision to abandon engineering, despite the medal awarded by the Lighthouse Commission and their offer of a job—to abandon mathematics and everything connected with it, for a more congenial occupation. Could I but find such a page in the Notebook, I should indeed have a treasure for every lover of R. L. S.!

Beginning my search at one end of the Notebook, I found ample evidence of his industry in the many theorems of *projective* geometry carefully written in ink, with appropriate diagrams. This, I realized, is *advanced* mathematics, and, despite the many idle verses with which the margins are filled, it is so well done that it has thrown those of us who like to pore over the book completely off the scent of the forty-seventh proposition.

Taking up the Notebook again and turning a number of blank pages near the middle, I came across something written at great speed by Stevenson in pencil and headed "Code XI, 47." The number 47 at once caught my eye, as I was searching for the forty-seventh proposition. But this was not geometry; it began:

1. The industrious husbandman . . .

and continued for several sections.

Obviously I was off the track of what I was hunting for, but, insatiably curious, I read on and found I was reading a translation of a passage about slaves and landholding. A little effort soon enabled me to identify the passage as one from Justinian's "Corpus Juris Civile"—the very code of Roman law in which the regulations are set forth about *emphyteusis!*

Starting again at the other end of the book, where everything is in faded pencil and singularly hard to decipher, I realized that in this *mélange* of mathematics and verse I was following, step by step, an earlier period of Stevenson's life than the one in which he had done the advanced theorems in ink. Here, if anywhere, I might find the crucial page. I read on and on, realizing that if I did find it, I should become my own best illustration of the man whose idling suddenly turns to business.

At the bottom of page 13 I found, standing by itself, a right triangle A B C, with a perpendicular from the right angle meeting the hypotenuse at D. Attached to each side is a carelessly drawn something—a sort of flap. Each of these flaps looks like a square erected on the side, but shown in perspective as it is being folded over on to the given triangle. Consulting an expert mathematician, I learned to my surprise that there are dozens of proofs for the forty-seventh proposition. "Oh yes," he said, "that may well be a dreaming boy's attempt at a solution."

Happily enough, the back of the same page was covered with verses, and the first line that came clear under my eyes was "Away with reasons!" I had it at last, between my finger and my thumb! And I had thought I should be idling!

We need not ask whether he could prove the forty-seventh proposition; he has done a better thing than that.

Edward D. Snyder is associate professor of English at Haverford College.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Usage, U. S. A.

A DICTIONARY OF MODERN AMERICAN USAGE. By H. W. Horwill. New York: Oxford University Press. 1935. 360 pp. $3.25.

IT is good to be reminded, and by so expert a student as Mr. Horwill, of the almost innumerable divergences of meaning and usage between American English and English English. How few there are who can really talk both languages. Even Mr. Horwill himself, who secretes a number of pleasant little anecdotes here and there in his dictionary, blundered occasionally. He tells us that in a hotel in Philadelphia he asked if this was the desk of the hotel clerk. No, said the young man, "This is the Hotel Lafayette." They had supposed him to be asking if this was the Hotel Clark.

Mr. Horwill has come pretty close (an Americanism which he doesn't mention; the frequent use of *pretty* to mean *fairly* or *rather*) to breaking a good old tradition; that of the Englishman's inability to get the hang of the American language. Particularly in the case of lexicons published by the noble old Oxford Press the errors in American usage have been delightful. I was looking forward to finding some grand howlers in this book, and I honorably confess my disappointment. I think that Mr. Horwill sometimes generalizes a bit too hastily on the basis of casual examples or individual idiosyncrasies. And he has neglected some very savory and valuable examples of our current argot. But this is not a dictionary of American slang. It is a systematic and intelligent study, continued through the past thirty years, of the more important diversities in the two languages. There are innumerable stories of embarrassments incurred by travelers on both sides who have innocently said something that meant something quite different to the hearer. Mr. Horwill's warning to the Englishman about the phrase *knocked up* is a fair example. Though I do not think that it necessarily means *enceinte,* as he seems to believe.

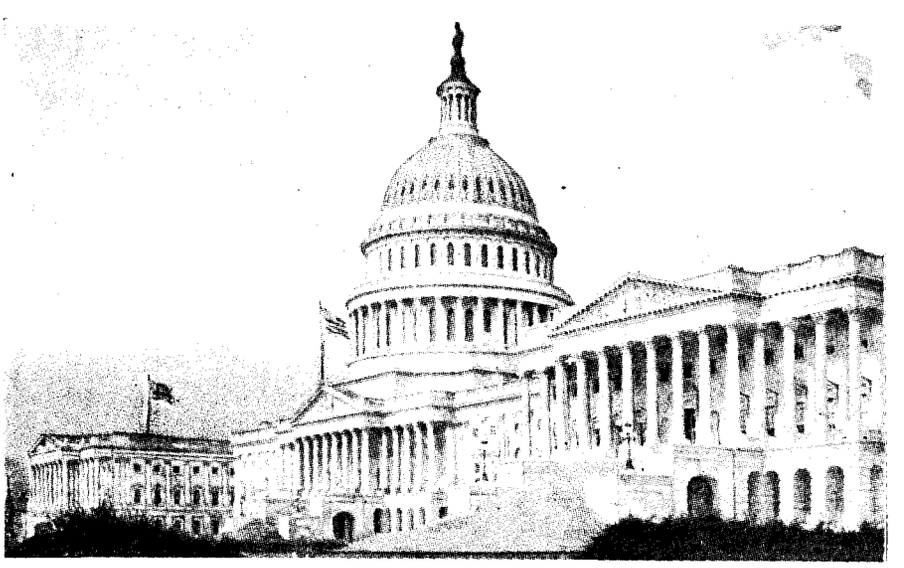
It would take more time, more thought, and more remembering than are available at this moment, fairly to analyze this valuable and entertaining book. I will simply set down some of the notions that occurred to me while going through it, in the hope of invoking other more accomplished amateurs of philology. The more one thinks about the subtle sea-change the English language has undergone in this country, the more one realizes that the differences are not mere chance but a happy illustration of temperamental discrepancy. Mr. Horwill is shrewd enough to have noticed (what we ourselves do not always realize) that the American is a slower speaker than the Briton. Though slower speakers we tend to be more slovenly in syntax; which has its large advantages too. I don't always agree with Mr. Horwill's findings: when he says, for instance, that "even educated writers and speakers" in the States treat *data* as a singular. The fact that Mr. Haskin, Professor McCarthy and Colonel House so use it does not disprove (or surprise) me. There is more stark unconsciousness of grammar in this country than in any other; if some newspapers spell *carousal* when they mean *carrousel* that does not make it accepted American usage. They simply don't know any better. Mr. Horwill says that the distinction between *lay* and *lie* "is not strictly observed in America." But that is true everywhere of beginners in the language. There are some grand examples in Joseph Conrad. See the story *Amy Foster:* "He crept into one of these boxes and laid down there." In despair at the frequency of this solecism I once wrote a verse:—

Lie and *lay* offer slips to the pen
That have bothered most excellent men:
You may say that you lay
In bed, yesterday;
If you do it today, you're a hen.

Set and *sit* are just as bad; I have on my desk a handsome colored postcard of the Capitol in Washington on which the printed legend begins: "The Capitol . . . one of the stateliest buildings in the world etc. . . . sets on a height." But ignorance is terrestrial, ecumenical and always sublimely pleasing; it need not be nationalized. Mr. Horwill is too gentle with the universal Americanism *all of* a thing: we all use it; but it is wrong. If *of* is a partitive then *all* annuls its meaning. When President T. R. wrote "All *of* the nations of the world" he was mistaken. So were Thomas Bailey Aldrich and Professor G. L. Kittredge, also quoted.

I guess that though Mr. Horwill spent several years in this country, as a newspaper man, his acquaintance with American colloquialisms is more through the printed word than in actual hearing. This must account for several slips. I cannot believe that "the department of the municipality that is responsible for the care of the streets is commonly known as a *street-cleansing department.*" Nor is it a *trainsman* on the railroads. He quotes the phrase *fixing to* (which is Southern) as meaning *attempting to.* It is more likely to mean getting ready to. *Allow* ("he allowed that, while he wasn't a doctor, he had had to cover up a good many of the doctor's mistakes," etc.) doesn't quite mean *assert* or *declare,* but something more like *admit.* I think the phrase is more often *keep tabs on* than *keep tab on.* He says that the word *handscrub* is used alternatively for *nailbrush,* which startles me; and that *slumber-robe* (which I have never encountered) is the equivalent of bathrobe. There is always a danger in accepting as general the weird or nifty coinages of the department store advertising. Which reminds me that he mentions our verb *to merchandise* with the comment that in England it is a noun only. But it was a good Shakespearean verb . . . see Sonnet 102. The retention of antique English usages that have since become obsolete in Britain is admittedly one of the pleasures of the American language.

Mr. Horwill mentions so many savory



"THE CAPITOL . . . SETS ON A HEIGHT"

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Americanisms I'm sorry he doesn't go a little farther and include several others that are rapidly becoming familiar on the other side. To kick in, to pass the buck, get the breaks, it's an act, to kid, to rib, the pay-off, to belong (in the sense of being in the know, regular, one of the right people, etc.) are examples of phrases that might be included in the next edition.

He mentions many little oddities of our double usage. For instance the puzzlement of English readers when Edith Wharton mentioned a *dinner-pail*. The American passion for the preposition *on*—"sale *on* men's suspenders." The fact that in England they usually put the word River first: The River Thames, whereas we say the Hudson River. Our odd use of the word *shape*—"the banks are in better shape." Our continuance of the Shakespearean *deck* of cards, which has vanished in England. Our horrible phrase "in the neighborhood of" when we simply mean "about" ("in the neighborhood of $200,000.") Surely he is wrong when he says that the American sailboat is the equivalent of the English sailing vessel? A sailboat is only a small pleasure craft; a sailing vessel may be a full rigged ship. He mentions *bromide*, but not *Babbitt*. The use of Gentile as meaning non-Mormon is not general but mostly local to Utah. The word *brook* (small stream) which Professor George Herbert Palmer thought was "the most regrettable loss the English language has suffered in America," has not vanished as much as he supposed. The word *branch*, also for a small stream, is I think mostly Southern. And by the way I hope our author will refrain from giving any credence to Yankees who tell him that the phrase you-all is ever used in the vocative singular. It *always* implies the plural.

Anyone could find variant opinion or inadvertencies in a book of this scope on so fluid a topic. Mr. Horwill deserves hearty congratulation on one of the very few successful essays on the American argot ever written by a foreigner. The fact that he realizes—as so few Englishmen ever do—that it is actually possible for a Briton to be a foreigner, is the reason for his success.

If I were going to England for the first time, or coming here ditto, I would jot down and carry in my pocket a paradigm of equivalent terms just for the fun of hearing them used. Mr. Horwill reminds us of many of them and gives me all the fun of going—"abroad." For instance:—

U. S. A.	ENGLAND
derby	bowler
The Dipper	The Great Bear
druggist	chemist
elevator	lift
fender (car)	wing
floorwalker	shopwalker
freight train	goods train
grade crossing	level crossing
long distance call	trunk call
baggage	luggage
check room	left luggage office
mail	post
mucilage	gum
sick	ill
suspenders	braces
truck	lorry
radio	wireless
vest	waistcoat
undershirt	vest
shoe	boot
custom tailor	bespoke tailor
can	tin
candy	sweets
checkers	draughts
cane	stick
chicken	fowl
sidewalk	pavement
pitcher	jug
bathrobe	dressing gown
bug	insect
ticket agent	booking clerk
cracker	biscuit
fall	autumn
composition book	exercise book
clipping bureau	press cutting agency

But just writing them down isn't nearly as much fun as hearing them said—in that indescriptibly and chirpingly odd way that the English have of using their own language. It always seems to me sad that they can never know how deliciously amusing it sounds.

And I dare say they have fun too, over here. Mr. Horwill describes the perplexity of the visitor whose first New York headline told him that some eminent politician had just Bolted His Ticket.

The perfect motto for this book would be that grand old saying of Montaigne: "I reject nothing which is current on the streets—for the man who would correct usage by grammar is a simpleton."

Murder for Pastime

(*Continued from page 4*)

forget the pre-Sayers, pre-MacDonald, pre-Freeman days when Fletcher was their chief resource!) If Fletcher is superseded, it is because better writers have come to the fore. Also, perhaps, because tastes have changed and standards have stiffened. We who can remember the years when Sherlock Holmes and Arsène Lupin and Father Brown were all that ministered to our sleuthing sense, remember also that we experienced, in reading those earlier masterpieces, certain thrills. I believe it is not simply because I am older that detective stories no longer frighten me. The contemporary writer of detective stories is not out to chill the blood but to test one's mental powers. The black shadow athwart the cave-opening on the moor, the "singular incident of the dog in the night," the Musgrave Ritual, the "Where does a wise man hide a tree?"—those spine-freezing instants no longer occur. This is chess, not poker. The dramatic element has faded. The thriller and the detective story have divorced.

Which is, after all, as it should be. There is a public for thrillers, but we detective story fans are no part of it. The satisfaction we feel, for example, when the chief suspect is himself murdered has nothing to do with sensation-seeking or bloodlust. What excites us is the fresh challenge to the brain, the necessity of cancelling a certain number of deductions too carelessly made and beginning anew with a doubly-tested lot. There is, for us, no thrill in murder, no "kick" in crime. Crime is merely a prerequisite to the solution. It is the solution that counts. If America is still behind England in the detective story field, that is, I believe, because American writers have not yet fully accepted the purely intellectual nature of the type.

Katharine Fullerton Gerould is well known as essayist and novelist.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEATH BLOW HILL *Phoebe Atwood Taylor* (Norton: $2.)	Murders of financial "tycoon" and evil-minded Cape Codder solved with neatness and dispatch by Asey Mayo.	The build-up overshadows the finish, but Asey is canny as ever, and the thrills pop steadily.	Good
THE ROSE PETAL MURDERS *Charles G. Givens* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2.)	Newspaper staff severely depleted by killer who dresses murder in rosy showers but doesn't fool reporter Hastings.	The pay-off is a bit disconcerting, but there's plenty of action and tough talk to enliven things.	Diverting
THE DEVIL'S TOY *Anita Stewart* (Dutton: $2.)	Leading players in musical show perish miserably one by one. Aged wardrobe lady (ex-star) finds killer.	Somewhat overwritten, somewhat cockeyed, and somewhat unbelievable as to denouement.	Somewhat awful

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Fear of Pain

"HONOUR COME BACK—" By Naomi Jacob. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

COLONEL WALTER BENHAM was one of the Fighting Benhams of old England. He believed in killing things quickly and neatly. "Always be humane," this humanitarian said, "remember that's one of the first duties of a good sportsman." So he killed his rabbits and foxes just as quickly as he possibly could. He killed off his elder son in the process of toughening him, and he tried hard enough at one time to kill his other son; but when he felt him to be a convert to militarism—which wasn't true— he began by treating him rather better, and the course of the late Great War (which turned out to be so much more than anyone bargained for) changed even a Fighting Benham; it finally broke the guv'nor, and he died. Michael, the younger son—it is his story—merely became demented. He almost went mad for good, but, after the wanderings of Ulysses, finally found peace and a wife in Italy, in the bosom of the family of one Carlo Chincarini of Malcesine.

The point about Michael was that from childhood he had hated to see animals hurt; he really feared pain for others far more than for himself; but it was a definite and overpowering fear. That sort of sensitive boy should have had just the opposite of the treatment his colossally stupid father accorded him; but the elder man was pure buckram. Even his wife finally couldn't stick it. She ran off with her son's godfather.

I did not find the first part of Miss Jacob's novel anything particularly fresh and new. Last summer I read a very good novel of a Spanish bullfighter who wanted his son to be a matador. In this instance also the son turned out to be what the world would call a sissie—he didn't want to kill bulls.

Of course one should want to kill rabbits, foxes, bulls, and finally one's fellow men, or else one is just a great big crybaby. That is obvious, and was particularly obvious to these several fathers. But the lady who wrote of the bull-fighter told her story with more originality. In Miss Jacob's story, though Colonel Benham is made pretty human, the scale is also loaded quite a bit against him. As a fine character, on the other hand, it is loaded just a bit in favor of A. G. Mansel, the popular author who turns pacifist. But Mrs. Benham, Michael's mother, seems to me a very well realized character of an original kind. She isn't the beaten wife at all; she is a woman of courage with a salty tongue. The godfather is a character one regrets being dropped. I could have spared a lot of the rest of the story in order to have more of him.

I should say that this novel could be cut by one-third without at all hurting it. Michael's casual love affairs, for one thing, are of no particular significance. The Italian part is excellent as to atmosphere; but Miss Jacob has a general tendency to write four pages when she need only write one. Her style is a cut above the flashy popular novel, but it isn't a style of any particular distinction. Where I think she has a decided gift is for what, in her stage experience, would have been called "character parts." (For, in a busy and varied career, this author has been an actress.) Polly, the ex-show girl and wife of the novelist, is very well done, without caricature; the Italian family is first rate; and here and there in England an occasional humble character. I think if Miss Jacob hadn't tried quite so hard to make this a book with a big message she'd have made it more real. The message is all right—anti-war; and the shambles that was the late war is well presented. But it has been done before, and even better.

Edge of Reality

THE FRUIT STONERS. By Algernon Blackwood. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

MR. BLACKWOOD lives on the edge of reality. His excursions are in two distinct directions—in that of horror, in which he is an undisputed master, and in that of delicate, almost inexpressible, fantasy, where he appeals strongly to some readers and not at all to others. It is this latter manner, the manner of his "A Prisoner in Fairyland" and "The Extra Day," that he employs in "The Fruit Stoners." This last is the story of a little girl who lives alone with her father in a big empty house, and amuses herself with making up fancies about the people of the jingle children use when telling their fortunes from buttons or fruit stones. One afternoon, by stumbling on the secret of the Nick of Time, she is able to have long adventures between one minute and the next, and meets her Fruit Stoners. Each is the very quintessence of his own quality, the Apothecary is a mage, the Thief has all the sinister fascination of the wicked adventurer. In her efforts to choose among them, in her struggling sense that this is and is not real, and in her unreasoning terror of the Man Who Winds the Clocks, she passes, in dream fashion, through all the confusion of a forced adolescence.

Mr. Blackwood has never written anything that did not have magic somewhere about it, and every now and then he shows his masterly power. The virtue of this book is its creation of the atmosphere of a dream; and a few readers will find it fascinating; but most will not care to listen to someone else, even Mr. Blackwood, telling his dreams at breakfast.

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The Uncrowned King of Ulster

CARSON THE STATESMAN. By Ian Colvin. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1935. $3.

Reviewed by TEMPLE SCOTT

THIS is the second part of the life of Lord Carson. The first part was written by Sir Edward Marjoribanks and published in 1932 under the title of "Carson the Advocate." It dealt with Carson's dramatic and distinguished career as a pleader before the English bar. The present volume, written by Mr. Ian Colvin, deals with an equally dramatic and distinguished part played by Carson in the field of English politics, in opposing the Third Home Rule Bill for Ireland sponsored by the Asquith Administration, a part which earned for him the title of "the uncrowned King of Ulster."

In the light of the events which have taken place since those hectic days we may, perhaps, hesitate to dignify Carson's championship of Ulster as that of a statesman, even if we freely acknowledge his disinterested enthusiasm and loyal devotion to England. Carson defended the Union rather as a lawyer pleading his client's legal rights than as a statesman who foresaw the trend of the social, economic, and political movements of his time. He dreamt no dreams: he only saw the immediate present, and what he saw of that filled him with indignation against the English ministry in power and distrust of the Irish Nationalists. These latter, he was convinced, would not stop at Home Rule, but would proceed to obtain full independence and, perhaps, lead to the dismemberment of the Empire. To prevent this Carson would fight with all his strength of mind and body. Moreover, he knew the temper of the people of Ulster, and knowing it, he was convinced that to include them under Home Rule would in all probability precipitate a civil war. It was to prevent this even more than anything else, that he fought so strenuously to prevent the passing of the Bill. Armed with his legal knowledge and gifted with remarkable oratorical powers he attacked Asquith and John Redmond, the Irish leader, in and out of Parliament with such effect that the Prime Minister, though he sought a mandate from the English electorate, was still left dependent on the Irish party in the House of Commons and receptive of the smart advice of his fellow Cabinet member, Lloyd George. As regards Ulster itself Carson organized an army of 100,000 men from its citizenry by way of preparation to resist, à outrance if necessary, its inclusion in any Home Rule scheme. In this he obtained the coöperation of the great landed proprietors of the province and held in leash a spirit in the people which the English administration dared not ignore.

This struggle, begun in 1910, continued until 1914, when the Great War brought on a new crisis in which both Irishmen and Englishmen found themselves compelled to sink their differences in a common anxiety to meet a foreign foe. What would have happened to Home Rule had the war not come is a question which leaves room for interesting speculation. For Carson was not the man to give up quietly. The cause for which he was fighting was in his blood, and we learn enough of his character and high spirit from Mr. Colvin's book to realize that the fight would have been to the finish. Carson was not in love with politics as a game. He was a great-hearted gentleman as well as a great lawyer, and when he consented to lead the Union Party he did so in order to serve his country and its people.

Mr. Colvin's book, though its subject-matter has now almost an ancient and fishy smell, makes a stirring story which will be read by Irishmen and Englishmen alike with absorbing interest.

A CARICATURE OF CARSON
From "Carson the Advocate" by Edward Marjoribanks

Hampton's Campaign

HAMPTON AND HIS REDSHIRTS. By Alfred B. Williams. Charleston, S. C.: Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co. 1935. $2.50.

MR. WILLIAMS, who was an eye-witness of Wade Hampton's stirring fight to capture the government of South Carolina from the carpet baggers in 1876, presents here an extraordinarily detailed record of that campaign. Claude Bowers used Mr. Williams's narrative in manuscript as a source in the preparation of his "The Tragic Era." Few state campaigns have been preserved so well for posterity as Hampton's has been in this volume. And, indeed, that courageous effort of the South's white race to win at the ballot box deserves an excellent history, for it was of deep significance to the South as a whole. Many of the minute details may be of interest only to South Carolinians, but the story is one which has a meaning in the annals of the nation. Mr. Williams writes as a reporter of an old and a fine school.

The New Sociology

SYSTEMATIC SOCIOLOGY. By Leopold von Wiese and Howard Becker. New York: John Wiley & Sons. $6.50.

Reviewed by CAROLINE E. MACGILL

WITH this new work a beginning is made towards a sociology that shall study the American scene from a severely scientific point of view. The basis of the book is the work of Professor con Wieser of the University of Cologne, the "Allgemeine Soziologie," very much enlarged and adapted to American experience in social processes, by Professor Howard Becker, of Smith College. The work is in no sense a text-book for introductory classes; one doubts whether more than an occasional beginner could be found willing to master its close and abundant reasoning. But for advanced students, and for those who seek something more in a work purporting to be sociological than a *rechauffée* of old and new "noble experiments" it is a mine of objective fact and suggestion. As far as possible, metaphysics is rigorously excluded.

Some sociologists have been known to say that the best studies in sociology were to be found in popular fiction. The underlying truth of that statement is to be found here in the detailed and immensely valuable studies in the dyad and triad groups. All human contacts, both psychic and social, are based upon association, dissociation, and distance, approach and avoidance, in popular language, likes and dislikes, in variously mingled proportions, between human beings and human beings, between human beings and plurality patterns, and between plurality patterns and plurality patterns, and the situations are infinitely varied and dynamic. In such a kaleidoscopically shifting scene, the static viewpoint cannot be maintained, except perchance by means of the camera, with its power to crystallize the overt attitudes of a moment. By such an isolation, resembling the biologist's slides, the sociologist must analyze the reactions of a moment, with their social implications. These reactions involve an infinite number of processes, passing swiftly from one type to another, constructive and destructive, formal and free, supraordinate and subordinate, anticipatory and simulative, sympathetic and antipathetic, and mimpathetic, by which the actions of the players upon the gigantic chessboard of life are determined.

Passing from a study of the systematics of common and interhuman relations to the systematics of plurality patterns, a functional analysis is built up, based upon such fundamental concepts as social distance, and a classification of different types of plurality patterns based thereupon, and not, in the customary manner, upon the purpose to be served, as the differentiating factor. The system expounded stimulates the scholar to go on with studies ranging from the current phenomena of the springtime, and the important dyadic groups resulting therefrom, to the nature, fictive and real, of institutions, classes, and corporate groups, to mention but a few. An important book, and one that should do much to bring sociology to its majority.

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A Parliament of Writers

BY AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS

TO the English delegation the most surprising things about the Congress of authors held recently in Paris was undoubtedly the audience and the reception given to the assembled writers. It appears that in Paris those who write books are news—just as are film stars in any country, and cricketers in England. Here was all the apparatus of loud-speakers, crowded press tables, nimble photographers, and a band of cinema operators (representing among other things "The March of Time")—all the things in short which make an assemblage believe itself important and interesting.

On this occasion writers from thirty-eight different countries had met at the instigation of such French authors as André Gide, André Malraux, and Jean Richard Bloch. Their purpose was to discuss, and even to protest against, such menaces to the writer's craft as those whose political forms are fascism and war, political forces which bring with them attendant censorships.

Messrs. E. M. Forster and Aldous Huxley headed the English delegation, and Mr. Forster, in a most engaging speech, pointed out that though writers were certainly not buried alive in England or dosed with castor oil, or imprisoned indefinitely in concentration camps (as delegates told us they were in Japan, Italy, and Germany) we were yet threatened by the same disease—a disease showing itself (characteristically) in a form so insidious that it was difficult to combat. He cited as an instance of the British type of censorship the treatment received by a book called "Boy," by James Hanley. This book had received respectful reviews, as well as attention and criticism from qualified people, yet several years after its publication a copy was seized by the police of a remote borough in Northern England—and then declared by the local magistrate to be obscene. The consequence was that the publisher was fined £300—a fine which (so lawyers assured him) might be repeated indefinitely in every county in England in respect of every copy of "Boy" wherever found. Mr. Forster went on to say that our boasted English freedom of speech did exist, but was only considered a suitable indulgence for those whose skin was white and whose income and position were respectable. Those British subjects whose skin happened to be brown or black or who had neither friends, money, nor influence, found that their freedom to speak their minds was decidedly doubtful and tenuous. He did not, he said, much like communism—but perhaps that was a fact accounted for by his birth, his age, and—finally—his income. But he very greatly preferred communism to fascism: "Communists do evil that good may come. Fascists and Nazis do evil that evil may come."

As an expectant and cheering Paris public obviously expected, one of the most remarkable speeches was that made by André Gide. He began his speech with a defense of internationalism, and went on to discuss two tendencies in French literature. After praising Racine and the French classicists, he continued:

> "Civilization," writes Monsieur Thierry Maulnier in the current issue of *L'Action Française*, "is falsehood. It is the attempt to replace the natural man by an artificial man; to replace nudity by clothing, ornaments, and masks. . . . But he who refuses to admit that this anti-natural trend of civilization, this splendid mendacity, embodies the very purpose of civilization,—its greatest and our own—is running atilt against civilization itself."
>
> For my part [commented Gide] I cannot agree that civilization is necessarily mendacious. A civilization that is a sham, that wants to be and proclaims itself to be a sham, that is an appropriate reflection and outcome of a mendacious social condition, and bears within it the germs of death. The works it continues to bring forth are moribund, as is the society which endorses them; and if we cannot rid ourselves of such shams, we are doomed. Hothouse culture has had its day; and if the nationalists defend it, so much the better.

Hardly less interesting were speeches by Bloch, Ehrenbourg, and Panferov, whose very different experiences of life and their craft had led them to much the same point of view; Julien Benda, too, was worth hearing. He though wishing to act with the others—the writers of the Left—yet approached the problem entirely from the Liberal standpoint.

A question arose as to the relations of the new body which has been formed as a consequence of the Congress—"Association Internationale des Ecrivains pour la Defense de la Culture"—with the P.E.N. Club. Mr. Herman Ould, the International Secretary, suggested that such work as was proposed by the new body had in fact been done by the P.E.N. Club for fourteen or fifteen years, but the impression which I hope will be left by discussions that are still going on is that the P.E.N. Club and the new organization can very usefully collaborate. The P.E.N. has a definitely less political point of view than the International Association, and would probably not be willing to subscribe to all the articles of association of the new organization: for besides establishing a literary prize—setting out to popularize the best exiled writers who cannot publish in their own country, to publish lists of recommended books, etc. (quality guaranteed by the names of those who are acting for the Association), the new body pledges itself "à lutter sur son propre terrain,—qui est la culture—contre la guerre, le fascisme, et d'une façon generale, contre toute menace affectant la civilization."

"Oh that mine enemy would write a book!" It would be very revealing if those in favor of nationalism, fascism, and the Nazi type of culture, would try to hold a congress of writers. Who would come to their call? Certainly not a brilliant gathering such as was constituted by those novelists, dramatists, and poets who stand against them.

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Elliott Over the White House

THE NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM. By W. Y. Elliott. New York: Whittlesey House. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by LAURENCE STAPLETON

ALTHOUGH not entirely economical in organization, or clear in definition, or substantial in evidence, Professor Elliott's study embodies many useful proposals for the reform of American government. Its subtitle, "A Program for National Security," indicates his purpose. The program suggests new political machinery to "save democracy"; the concept of political security rests upon an imperfectly articulated political theory, some of which could be interpreted as bearing toward fascism.

Of the proposals for reform, the most startling is that which would allow the President, once during his term, to dissolve Congress. This change, as well as the transformation of the senate into a body of elders with power to delay and to revise but not to legislate, aims to conserve the financial resources of the government, to minimize patronage, and to solidify executive control.

Professor Elliott wishes also to enlarge the cabinet and to create a national economic advisory council. He suggests a permanent legislative steering committee with power to pass bills in the absence of Congress (subject to ratification), and a permanent civil service on the British model. States, except as cultural units, would be supplanted by more efficient regional governments, possibly corresponding to federal reserve districts. Governors would have to deal with a single chamber, and would also be endowed with power of dissolution. There is not space here to examine these proposals in detail. No student of government would object to some, such as the reform of civil service. But the idea of presidential power of dissolution, unchecked by a strong cabinet or by party responsibility, seems on the face of it an untenable doctrine. And to take a minor example, recent German history, no less than the famous British orders in council, leaves little confidence in what might be done by a legislative steering committee.

It is not Professor Elliott's experience or his knowledge of government that is at fault, but his ability to grasp problems of general political significance either in their historical or formal context. (An exception to this is his discussion of the Supreme Court.) His failure to distinguish between the state and government is serious. To believe that government can be a neutral referee in the "evolution of business toward the corporative state" is to ignore the forces of which government is composed. In his treatment of labor problems also, Professor Elliott's theories are a mechanical abstraction. Equally doubtful, without more proof, is his theory that the state can survive its economic dilemma by becoming a giant holding company "with such substantial stock ownership and representation in direction and management that it can exert all the scrutiny necessary for a flexible control of the nation's economic life." This last phrase is suspiciously vague. Is it vagueness also which forestals the realization that a government constituting itself as a holding company would still be holding *for* those groups strongest, though not most representative?

The character of these proposals in their present form creates an impression reinforced by statements of a more objectionable kind: see the support of compulsory arbitration; support of company unions; advocacy of military training in C.C.C. camps. These make the book partly fascist in effect, although I am sure this was not Professor Elliott's intention. Some remarks must have been made either carelessly or in ignorance ("The oldest economic incentive to force production—the fear of starvation—has practically disappeared. . . . "). As a whole, however, the book will draw attention to important problems, and can do no harm, since it resembles nothing so much as a platform without a party.

Letters to the Editor

(*Continued from page* 9)

thor who is attempting to record, clarify, and unify the multiple phases of politics, economics, science, philosophy, religion, morals, manners, literature, music, and art in Sumeria and Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria, Judea and Persia, India and Central Asia, China and Japan through a period of 3000 years, is to make demands that hardly any historian of any scope has been able to meet. Gibbon is the only exception known to me (Thucydides was writing a monograph); and Gibbon's resolute scouring of primary sources was made possible by the restriction of his subject, for the most part, to political history. My own interest is not political but cultural; the political story has been too often told. I have cared for political and economic history only to the extent of sketching it in as the background of a culture; it is not my essential concern; and I have not felt called upon, in this field, to make a study of original sources—though the volume makes liberal use of the old Greek historians. But in the realm of culture I have, in nearly all major instances, gone to the masterpieces of literature, philosophy, and art themselves, even to the extent of traveling thousands of bug-infested miles to see a building (as in the case of Angkor), or re-reading the entire Old Testament as partial preparation for one chapter. To prove this point in detail would be a weary conceit; let the honest reader judge for himself.

With these exceptions I should say that the Doctor's stricture is well deserved. I regret that when, a year ago, I asked Professor Breasted to read my typed manuscript on Egypt and the Near East, and to give me the benefit of his criticism and advice, he was too busy to comply. It would have been easier for me to appreciate his corrections then than it is now; but I am grateful for them nevertheless. These and other corrections will be entered into any future edition that may be permitted to my book. Meanwhile I offer my profound gratitude to the many critics and scholars who have given me an encouraging word.

WILL DURANT.

Los Angeles, Cal.

Long Night

ARCTIC S O S. By Joseph M. Velter. Translated from the German by R. M. and W. J. Braithwaite. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1935. $2.

Reviewed by ARCHIE BINNS

IT seems axiomatic that a character should know either more or less than his author. In "Arctic S O S" there seems too little of this disparity. The author, his three characters, and a nutrition-conscious government know that oranges are a source of Vitamin C. Therefore the three men, spending a year at a lonely Siberian Radio station, are provided with a year's supply of frozen oranges. The operator devours his share during the first three months, and in the fourth month he develops scurvy; and there is no help for him. The store contains enough food for at least two years; can it be that they have no potatoes, canned tomatoes, dried peppers, the makings of fresh bread—any of a dozen common antiscorbutic articles of diet? Why not eat raw some of their plentiful supply of fresh meat? If the author had known more than his characters, here would have been a chance for irony. If even one of the characters had been aware of what every young man in the Arctic should know—

This may sound like carping on a small point, but it is the flawed point on which the plot turns. And when a plot turns on such a small point, that point should be a jewel bearing.

At the beginning of the Siberian winter Kurakin, the hunter, is depicted with nerves frayed by three months of close association with his two comrades in the solitude. By the end of a truly hard winter he is a changed man, joyfully looking forward to another year at the lonely outpost in the company of the professor whom he shot and almost killed at the height of his madness. This reviewer has never been in the Arctic, either, but it is reasonably well established that some men are able to stand long periods of loneliness and isolation with little discomfort and some are not. Those who cannot, break. Kurakin's reversal sounds improbable.

For all this, Joseph Velter can write. Much that is fresh and vigorous and colorful shows through a translation which leaves something to be desired. "Porridge is jolly nourishing, what, old chap?" So speaks the bearded Russian to his comrades in the Siberian wilds.

Archie Binns, author of "Lightship," is a radio operator as well as a novelist.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 70)

BACON—"ESSAYS CIVIL AND MORAL"

He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator; and if time of course alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?

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The PHŒNIX NEST

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE prolific and emolumentary (I know there's no such word!) *Rupert Hughes* has taken to the historico-literary novel. By the middle of August Harper & Brothers will publish for him his own account of the romance between *Mary Godwin Shelley*, who first married the great English poet, and *John Howard Payne*, author of that saccharine classic, "Home, Sweet Home." As a matter of fact Payne was a roamer and never owned a home. Mr. Hughes's title for his book is "The Man Without a Home." . . . It is amusing to hear authors recalling their first flights. *Maysie Greig*, a popular romancer, can remember dictating long stories to her mother at the age of five. She goes on to say:

> When I was six I horrified my parents by reciting stories of my own composition. I say horrified because once while we were walking in the gardens at Harrogate, I escaped from them and was later discovered perched on the bandstand reciting to a packed audience a story I had made up myself entitled, "The New Kingdom." When I was eleven I wrote a long complete novel entitled, "Love is the True Marriage Maker." I shall never forget one line of it: "The bomb burst. The soldiers rushed for buckets of water to extinguish the bomb."

Miss Greig and her husband live in an old Tudor home, Yew Tree House, in the small Hampshire village of St. Mary Bourne, England. . . . *Joseph C. Lincoln* reports that "up Cape Cod way the black bass are biting fine this year." . . . Even before she became *George Preedy*, and gained a second life as a novelist, *Marjorie Bowen* had piled up a considerable reputation by her delving in past epochs. Now Appleton-Century announce that they are publishing her novel on that extraordinary English harlot, Sophie Dawes. The arrangement of this novel is interesting. Its first section deals with the principal character, its second with the setting, and the third with the actual story. The author, by this method, can emphasize the dramatic elements of the plot in the third section. . . . Here comes *George Frisbee* on his favorite thesis:

> I liked your editorial on *Oliver Herford*. What a brilliant mind was his. He knew more about the truth of "Shakespeare" authorship than all the profs in the country. He laughed at my pokes at the Paediculi: in his last letter to me he said, "Don't be too hard on the poor fellows, rather pity them. They are so afraid of losing their jobs that they dare not open their mouths." He had the Works of *Shakespeare* bound in red and gold and labeled "The Works of Edward De Vere." I shall miss him. He and *Gelett Burgess* and *Carolyn Wells* could not stomach the Stratford-upon-Avon tripe. Now he is gone. Burgess is going Hollywood; Carolyn is grinding out Whodunits; and the De Vere cause is left to poor, weak little me.

Mr. Frisbee also reminds me that I trained in the same camp, during War time, with *Earl Carroll*. He also speaks of another—*Guy Wetmore Carryl*, son of the famous *Charles E. Carryl* who wrote that best of all books, "The Admiral's Caravan." The son was enormously clever, but the father was a genius like that other famous *Carroll, Lewis*. . . . Now that all Germany's gone quite insane, how pleasant it is to note one exception—the behavior on the tennis court, at Wimbledon, of *Baron von Cramm*. . . . A sportsman and a gentleman! . . . I hear from *Mrs. John P. Buchanan*, director of the White Top Festival, that it occurs on White Top Mountain in Southwest Virginia, on August 16th and 17th this summer. This festival was started in 1931 in an endeavor to discover and preserve the best native Anglo-Saxon folk music, balladry, arts and traditions, and to make them available for use in American creative art. If you can get to White Top you will find in full swing ancient and later songs, ballads, dance tunes on fiddle, banjo, fife, and dulcimer, "play-party" games, traditional dance figures and folk hymns, and so forth. There's a great contest and a display of folk handicraft. If you want to know more, write to Mrs. John P. Buchanan, "Roseacre," Marion, Virginia. . . . *Thyra Samter Winslow* has gone to Doubleday, Doran and *Stephen Vincent Benét* has left Doubleday, Doran for Farrar & Rinehart. Mrs. Winslow is publishing "My Own, My Native Land," some forty stories about a Southwestern town, some of which appeared in *The New Yorker*. Mr. Benét's next published work will be poetry, "Burning City," to appear in the Fall. . . . The brother of *Pete Howe* (*Atlantic Monthly, New York Herald Tribune, Book Business, New York Evening Post*, or what have you) is *George Locke Howe*, an architect in Providence, and he has written a first novel, "Slaves Cottage," which Coward-McCann are bringing out on the 22nd of this month. . . . *Margaret Ayer Barnes* is at Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, for the summer. . . . *Sabatini* and his sculptress bride are landscape gardening their place on the River Wye in Herefordshire, England. . . . *John Buchan* is visiting many of the familiar scenes of his favorite England and Scotland before sailing for Canada, where he will become Governor General. . . . *Gertrude Atherton* is doing a new novel based on the life of the poet, Horace. . . . *Audrey Lucas*, daughter of *E. V. Lucas*, has just had a first novel, "Double Turn," published by Dutton. . . . There's now "A Dictionary of Modern American Usage," by *Herbert W. Horwill*, published by the Oxford University Press. . . . *Eric Hatch* is a highly successful young writer. He is also a steady producer. His "Fly-by-Night" came out in June and in November, there'll be another one, "My Man Godfrey." Little, Brown are his publishers. I like best a verse they quote from a poem this American Wodehouse wrote at the tender age of nine:

I think of what beyond those mountains lies
What world of vastness with its cheer and hope
And then I think of blue and sunny skies
While I with matters great do plan to cope.

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by A. G. STREET

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The Clearing House

CONDUCTED BY AMY LOVEMAN

Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

MEN OF ART. By Thomas Craven. *Simon & Schuster.*

THE CONSTANT NYMPH. By Margaret Kennedy. *Doubleday, Doran.*

THE CONGO AND OTHER POEMS. By Vachel Lindsay. *Macmillan.*

Travel Books for the Young

V. C. M. of Boston, Mass., *wishes to compile a list of fairly recent travel books which will be of interest to high school boys and girls. Most of the titles in her library at present are, she says, out of date and not at all popular.*

SINCE high school youth is still in that enviable age when the mere thought of adventure sets the pulses to racing, I have drawn up a list which contains books dealing in the main with the lesser travelled parts of the world where the unexpected may still be supposed to lurk around the corner and excitement to wait on daring. Peter Fleming's BRAZILIAN ADVENTURE (Scribners) is a work of the sort, fresh, debonair, and full of the zest of the Englishman who feels the far corners of the earth calling and "ever with a frolic welcome" takes hardship and mishap. The brief volume in which James Norman Hall recounts his experiences on a trip from Tahiti to Pitcairn's Island in search of information on the men of the *Bounty* is full of the same sort of incident that gave the fictionized versions of the famous mutiny which he and Charles Nordhoff wrote so much fascination. THE TALE OF A SHIPWRECK (Houghton Mifflin) indeed reads almost like a fragment from PITCAIRN'S ISLAND itself. In TURKESTAN REUNION (Day) Eleanor Lattimore presents in book form the copious letters she sent home to her family depicting the alarms and excursions of a trip she and her husband made through Chinese Turkestan. The Lattimores travelled whenever possible in native fashion, passed their nights at crude inns, ate the food of the country, talked to the inhabitants, and forgot about the difficulties of their journeying in the interest of their experiences. The letters are informal and lively, and make entertaining reading.

I'm not sure that boys and girls will be quite as appreciative as are more seasoned readers of the literary quality and fine observation that lend distinction to F. M. Stark's VALLEYS OF THE ASSASSINS (Dutton), but even though they may read it for other values they can hardly fail to enjoy this Englishwoman's narrative. An archæologist whose knowledge lent edge to her impressions, she presents a vivid portrayal of the people, customs, and scenery of Persia. Incidentally, while I'm writing of this book, I'm put in mind of another which I read in galley proof a few days ago and which Little, Brown is to publish early in September. This is Carl R. Raswan's BLACK TENTS OF ARABIA, a vividly pictorial and exceedingly interesting chronicle, full of the side lights, the bits of personal characterization, and the fragments of conversation which lend vivacity to a travel book. Quite different from it, but full, too, of interest is FIRST OVER EVEREST! (McBride), by P. F. W. Fellowes and some of the associates who made the hazardous airplane flights with him over "the top of the world." The various accounts are given in the words of the pilots and observers, and are accompanied by a magnificent set of illustrations. Young people, too, especially young boys, might find extremely interesting AN EASTERN ODYSSEY (Little, Brown), by Georges Le Fèvre, which describes the Citroën Trans-Asiatic motor expedition from Beirut to Peking, an adventure of high sort.

But lest V. C. M.'s boys and girls feel that travel to be interesting has to be in the remote corners of the world, I add to my list such books as Louis Adamic's THE NATIVE'S RETURN (Harpers), S. Tatiakov's A CHINESE TESTAMENT (Simon & Schuster), and by way of complete and startling change, Lewis Gannett's SWEET LAND (Doubleday, Doran), the chronicle of a tour through our own United States.

The Young Pretender

L. W. C. of New Hampton, N. H., *wants books bearing on the escape of the Young Pretender after the battle of Culloden, especially those dealing with the part played by Flora Macdonald.*

Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, son of James II, born in Rome and, after a picturesque life, dying there, has been a favorite subject for fiction and has had considerable historical study spent upon him. One of the main reference works for his career is, I am afraid, out of print, though to be had in libraries, A. C. Ewald's two-volume LIFE AND TIMES OF CHARLES STUART, THE YOUNG PRETENDER, but Andrew Lang's PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD (Longmans, Green) is to be had from bookstores. In John Buchan's BOOK OF ESCAPES AND HURRIED JOURNEYS (Houghton Mifflin), pages 121-168 are devoted to the Prince's hurried departure after Culloden, dressed in feminine garb and assisted by the devoted Flora Macdonald. D. R. Chidsey has written a biography entitled BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE (Day), which is a vivid and lively chronicle, and G. R. Francis's SCOTLAND'S ROYAL LINE (Dutton), is a life of "that hero of romance and misfortune." The Appleton-Century Company, too, has issued a study of him, PRINCE CHARLIE, by C. Mackenzie.

Scott, besides introducing the Young Pretender in his TALES OF A GRANDFATHER and WAVERLEY, has him appear in REDGAUNTLET in "1760 or just after," Prince Charlie at that time being "about forty or upwards." Thackeray, in THE MEMOIRS OF BARRY LYNDON, describes him at Rome as drunk as any porter." He is the hero of THE FLIGHT OF THE HERON (Dodd, Mead), by D. K. Brosier, a tale which ends with Prince Charlie's flight by sea; PETTICOAT GOVERNMENT (Doubleday, Doran), by Baroness Orczy, and CLAYMORE (London: Lovat Skeffington), by Arthur D. Howden Smith. These, however, are but a few of the many tales in which Charles Edward figures, selected as perhaps the most outstanding of the lot.

Collecting Books

W. P. of New York City, *who read somewhere recently the title of a book by a woman which bears "on the art or pleasure of collecting or living with books," and has since forgotten it, wants to know whether the Clearing House can place it for her, and also wishes the titles of other similar volumes by women.*

I have an idea that the book to which W. P. refers is BOOKS AS WINDOWS (Stokes), by May Lamberton Becker, who so long conducted the Reader's Guide in *The Saturday Review*. We printed a reference to it, if I mistake not, in one of the letters on reading published recently on our correspondence page, and certainly Mrs. Becker has written frequently and eloquently enough of the pleasure to be had from books to be the author V. P. has in mind. Curiously enough there are no works on the collecting of books (except in a general sense) by women that I can find. Such authors as Katharine Fullerton Gerould and Agnes Repplier in this country, Virginia Woolf and Rebecca West in England, are constantly writing of books and are full of literary reference, but works like A. Edward Newton's THE AMENITIES OF BOOK COLLECTING (Little, Brown), Barton W. Currie's FISHERS OF BOOKS (Little, Brown), Holbrook Jackson's ANATOMY OF BIBLIOMANIA (Scribners), Christopher Morley's EX LIBRIS CARISSIMIS (University of Pennsylvania Press), and John T. Winterich's COLLECTOR'S CHOICE (Greenberg) do not seem to emanate from the feminine pen.

Addenda

Ivan Swift of Harbor Springs, Mich., very kindly adds to my inadequate reply to the request of *G. O. A. of Lansing, Mich.*, for information on authors born in that state, the fact that there is to be found in the Michigan State Library a volume entitled FROM INDIAN LEGEND TO THE MODERN BOOKSHELF (Ann Arbor: Mahr), that will give her just the help she needs. *M. D. H. of Fresno, Calif.*, who asked some time ago for works on Early Jewish history should have been told of a very excellent work, which has long been in wide use and is still in constant demand. This is the set of volumes by the late Rabbi Maurice H. Harris, published by the Block Publishing Company, which comprises A THOUSAND YEARS OF JEWISH HISTORY (from the days of Alexander the Great to the Moslem Conquest of Spain); MEDIÆVAL JEWS (from the Moslem Conquest to the discovery of America); MODERN JEWISH HISTORY (from the Renaissance to the close of the World War). All these books have bibliographies.

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The New Books

Fiction

PLACE OF HAWKS. By August W. Derleth. Loring & Mussey. 1935. $2.50.

Many years ago in Wisconsin a twelve-year-old boy made occasional rounds with his physician-grandfather. Mr. Derleth looks back on those days and remembers, and herewith are four novelettes based on four of those old families who settled near the little town of Sac Prairie. Descendants of French and German aristocracy, they were people of strong individuality, but lack of emotional stability drove many of them to the borderlands of psychopathology.

As each story opens, Mr. Derleth with mellow charm reflectively brushes away the cobwebs of the past until each family group emerges, grey with the dust of memory, but effectively visible upon the stage. However, once the drama has begun in earnest, these harassed, stormy ghosts move before us exactly as the twelve-year-old boy encountered them. The heaviness of such factuality of treatment of the scene upon scene of extraordinary emotional tension which follow unfortunately awakens little emotional interest in response. The effect is that of having watched an entire play through the wrong end of an opera glass.

Poignant as is some of the characterization, a curious lack of warmth, over-detail, and faulty structural technique do much towards destroying the force of some really excellent writing. An uneven book by a talented and sincere author.

J. S. U.

Miscellaneous

THE SAGA OF OLD TUOLUMNE. By Edna Bryan Buckbee. Press of the Pioneers. 1935. $4.

The gold-digging operations in California following the discovery of gold there early in 1848 developed two fields: that of the Northern Mines, of the American and Yuba rivers of the Sacramento district, and that of the Southern Mines, of the Stanislaus River in present Tuolumne County of the Sierra foothills in the latitude of San Francisco.

Mrs. Buckbee, who is of the "first families" of Tuolumne County, has compiled her narrative from the facts and traditions that make for the life history of the Southern Mines. By so doing she has portrayed the life in the northern diggings as well, but the southern diggings were featured by a large element of Spanish blood—Mexican and South American and native Californian. Old names, Sonora, Campo Seco, El Serrodel Cruz, Paso del Pino, San Ignacio Flat, El Tigre, bespeak Spanish discovery and occupancy.

The American names likewise promise romance. With their Stanislaus River, Poverty Gulch, Table Mountain, Angel's Camp, Jackass Hill, the Southern Mines were Bret Harte and Mark Twain country. Young Sam Clemens discovered his "Jumping Frog" yarn in Angel's Camp, and at Jackass Hill Bret Harte gathered his inspiration for his "Truthful James" of Table Mountain, and other fiction in verse and prose.

The story should not be taken as one of mainly local interest. The scenes are representative of a phase of Far West life that has entered into history and fiction. They contain a great deal of interest to the general reader and to the writer in search of reliable local color. The illustrations, from old prints, add to the faithfulness of the text, and the Bibliography of published source-material is a reading course in Californiana relating to mining-camp ways and means characteristic of the Days of Gold.

E. L. S.

THE GAME OF CHESS. By Dr. Siegbert Tarrasch. McKay. 1935.

ONE - HUNDRED - AND - ONE OF MY BEST GAMES OF CHESS. By F. D. Yates. The same.

A PRIMER OF CHESS. By Jose R. Capablanca. Harcourt, Brace. 1935.

CHESS FOR THE FUN OF IT. By Brian Harley. McKay.

By the student of chess, the translation of the late Dr. Tarrasch's "The Game of Chess" will be received with enthusiasm. The author was a prolific writer on the game, but this is the first of his books to be published in English. So few chess masters are gifted with the ability to write, that this volume is almost unique in being delightfully written as well as thoroughly sound as a textbook.

The greater part of the work is devoted to a comprehensive analysis of the middle game, probably the most difficult part of the game to explain. Recurring combinations, such as pinned pieces, double attacks, common pawn formations, etc., serve to break up the subject matter into convenient chapters. Each typical position is discussed at length, beginning with the moves which created it, and including the characteristic end game which usually follows.

There is a brief but thorough treatment of end games at the beginning of the book (the author advances the theory that a student should begin his chess education with end game play, since that is more easily understood) and an unusually logical study of the theory of the opening, together with explanations of the better known openings. In both of these Dr. Tarrasch has advanced many new ideas, well worth consideration by masters as well as students.

The death of F. D. Yates, outstanding English chess player for a quarter of a century, was a severe loss to that country's game. Yates did more than any other one man to keep alive in England interest in chess and in international tournaments. This collection of his finest games, published after his death in 1932, is a well deserved tribute to his achievements on the board and in the clubs of his native country. Yates had no decided style as a chess player, but the games are obviously those of a master to whom chess was an art as well as a science.

"A Primer of Chess," by Jose R. Capablanca, ex-world champion, is the second in a projected series of three textbooks by the eminent Cuban. It was written, he says in his introduction, "to fill an existing need in chess literature." Unfortunately, the need is not quite obvious, since Mr. Capablanca fails to add anything to Staunton's "Handbook of Chess," written about three-quarters of a century ago.

(*Continued on next page*)

FOR AUTHORS ONLY...

Ready August 9th — the most amusing book since Mark Twain — **"FOR AUTHORS ONLY: and Other Gloomy Essays"** which tell the painful truth about the writing of the Chronicles of Arundel. Be sure to get a First Edition. 446 pages—$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*

KENNETH ROBERTS

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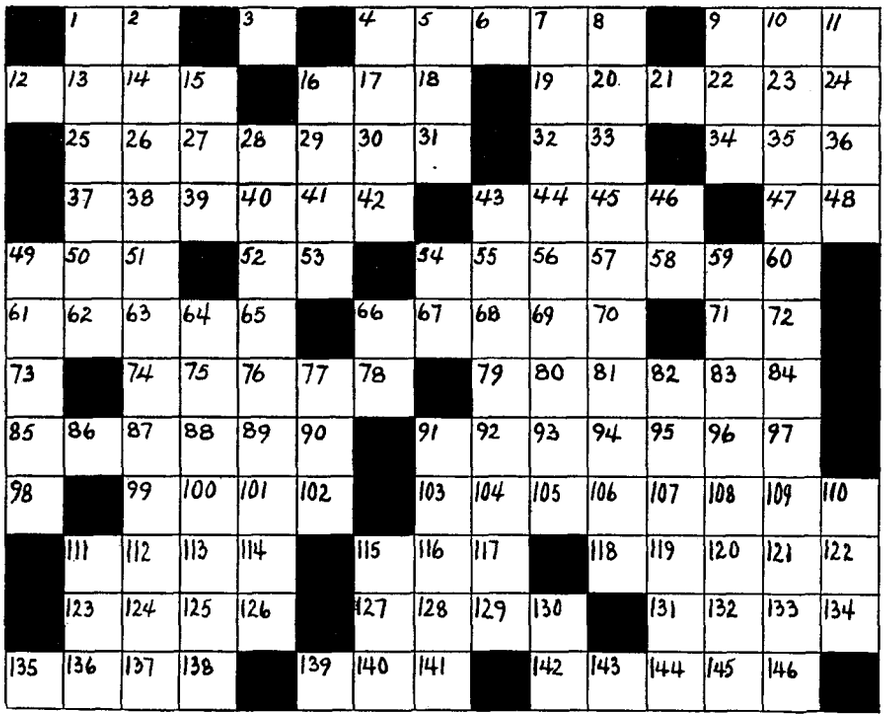
Double-Crostics: No. 71

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-two words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find by reading (from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

I. Argument with one proposition not stated (logic).

II. Fighter to the finish.

III. Lacking the social graces.

IV. Wife of a Homeric hero.

V. Mechanical man.

VI. Rhetorical contrasts.

VII. Morbid drowsiness.

VIII. To move clumsily.

IX. Descend; settle.

X. Small and imperfect ear of corn.

XI. Knowing many languages.

XII. Modern American dramatist.

XIII. Being, existence.

XIV. Lacking in smartness or taste.

XV. Flemish painter (1577-1640).

XVI. Neighborhood.

XVII. Attracted.

XVIII. Hiawatha's Dakota maiden.

XIX. A Biblical physician.

XX. Appalling.

XXI. Idea, theory.

XXII. Emblem of morning freshness.

WORDS

114 17 117 143 46 126 22 63 109

18 129 102 69 3 50 110

95 100 6 77 128 107

16 89 31 108 71 141 52 12 111 40

85 9 1 57 97

73 105 133 94 79 48 138 42 86 130

19 119 29 96 104 81 68 33

35 13 135 74 64 93

37 145 134 88 80 7

72 144 10 32 67 53

92 43 132 122 39 75 125 70

112 21 49 34 41 121

30 61 127 87 137 2

139 5 47 65 24

124 91 115 8 66 90

51 60 101 98 4 20 118 11

26 45 36 116 14 54 106

113 55 44 83 146 25 62 99 76

23 131 78 15

136 103 123 27 58

28 82 142 140 59 38

56 84 120

The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Staunton's work, edited and revised many times, still is adequate as an introduction to the game for beginners. Capablanca's "Primer" suffers from the master's insufficient command of the English tongue. It is to be hoped that his third book will be of a more advanced type, since his thoughts on master play would seem more pertinent to the student of chess.

"Chess for the Fun of It," by Brian Harley, is another textbook for beginners, which likewise fails as an improvement over Staunton. The work is anything but clear and does not indicate a very thorough understanding of the game on the part of its author. Very few players learn the rudiments from a textbook, but it is to be doubted whether one could learn them from Mr. Brian Harley's work.

J. D.

Poetry

LOW CEILING. By Lincoln Kirstein. Putnams. 1935. $2.

This book of poems by the versatile editor of the late *Hound & Horn* is "uneven," as every critic can say about any collection of poems. Individually, the poems are as uneven. None is wholly successful; by which we mean that none fulfils the purpose to which the author has apparently devoted it. ("Apparently," because many of the poems are so private that no one not resident within Mr. Kirstein's skin could definitely apprehend the purpose.) None wholly fails, thanks to strong nervous diction, the controlled excitement, which characterize the poet even when he is most specious.

The best things first. Mr. Kirstein is as free of "influences" as a man can be who is writing about contemporary things in the contemporary idiom. His vocabulary is his own, his rhythm is his own, his attitude is his own. The Family Tree simply isn't here to bark up. The technic is hard, but not bad-public-school-boyishly hard like Auden's; but if Mr. Kirstein is too intense, ordinarily, to turn a swooning cadence, he is not incapable (*cf.* "Sail," "Horse and House") of a surer, truer music. Most of all, he has kept his eye upon the image, and it has not blurred in transmission.

When the poems fail, as most of them do partially, and some wholly, it is for three reasons: the symbolism, however precise, is hopelessly private; or, constructions become careless to the point of illiteracy; or, the impulse behind the poem is cheap. The last failure is illustrated by such would-be swaggers, actual sentimentalizations, as "Baby Gangster," "Blackmail": may not this genre be left to Mr. Fearing, who understands it? Mr. Kirstein seems merely ill at ease in the costume. The longest poem, "Chamber of Horrors" is a triumph of sheer virtuosity; but fundamentally it is a thing to thrill the movie fans with, or college girls at a poetry reading, and it seems a pity that such a mastery of technic should go to realize stuffed bloodhounds on chunks of artificial ice. And although it is but fair to say that only a few of the poems are invalid for this reason, there are more than a few which are invalid, so far as the uninitiate reader is concerned, simply be-

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cause in them the poet is publicly but quite incomprehensibly talking to himself. An image is a symbol, and a symbol stands for something, to recall, or to communicate; but unless I was there, the "he" in "October" is as unreal as a dream I never had, for me, however vividly the memories of "sister," "shirt-studs," and "Christ! I'd almost forgotten the whisky!" represent "him" to Mr. Kirstein himself. An accurate, charming, no doubt significant portrait; but its face is to the wall.

The best poems in the book are "Georgic," which is one of the earliest, and "Change of Heart," which is probably the latest. The first is an elegy whose tenderness is made almost intolerably poignant by the brittle, sharp diction and the clarity of the detail. It illustrates all of the poet's virtues, and almost none of his failings: sincere, distinguished verse, with no snarling, no chattering into the pillow, no M-G-M ideology: a poem as firm and as beautiful as its conception was true. The note needs to be struck more often.

D. F.

Brief Mention

That large group of readers who need to brush up their knowledge of classical writing, or to supplement it if it touches only the high spots of Greek letters, can turn to *A Handbook of Greek Literature* (Dutton), in which H. J. Rose, professor of Greek in the University of St. Andrews and of Latin at University College of Wales, furnishes a brief but inclusive survey of developments from Homer to Lucian. * * * A rather miscellaneous group of books includes the lively, if thin, chronicle by Grace L. Roosevelt of an unconventional motor tour in Europe, entitled *We Owed It to the Children* (Coward-McCann: $1.90), "Artie" McGovern's *The Secret of Keeping Fit* (Simon & Schuster), in which a noted physical training director and instructor points the way to better health; and a volume of *Continental Plays* (Houghton Mifflin: $1.50), edited by Thomas H. Dickinson, containing the works of such representative writers as Tolstoy, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann, and Chekov. The Cambridge University Press issues in pamphlet form a graceful little address by Lord David Cecil on *Jane Austen* (but, oh why, did Lord David say "her plots turn on love, but only one of her lovers, the self-controlled Mr. Knightley, do we hear declare his passion," when Mr. Darcy can rise to refute her?) * * * From the press of Harcourt, Brace comes *Jane Addams of Hull House*, by Winifred E. Wise, designed as a juvenile but put out on the death of Miss Addams with the hope of catching the eye of the adult reader as well. * * * Finally mention should be made of the issue of *The New International Year Book for* 1934, and of *American Women* (Los Angeles: Blank Publishing Company), edited by Durward Howes. This last is a sort of Who's Who which admits to its pages many women of far less importance than find their way into its prototype, but since it omits from them such names as Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, and Ellen Glasgow, to mention a few selected almost at random, it can hardly be regarded as in any sense either "official" or other than a footnote to the other volume.

CHINESE PROVERB: If a horse gets no wild grass he never becomes fat; if a man does not receive lucky help he never becomes rich—I am seeking a $20,000 personal loan; details on request. . . . Yes! I wrote the novel BACHELOR'S DAUGHTER recently published by DORRANCE. Hubert Madere, Hahnville, Louisiana.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

COLLEGE GRADUATE OF 27; five years experience secretary-stenographer to surgeon; loyal, imaginative; above average ability; desires position requiring initiative. Address "Employed," c/o Saturday Review.

A. GEE ESS. I wrote.

$650 WILL send me to college. Loan. Desperate.

COLLEGE TEACHER visiting Omaha, Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Manhattan, Detroit, Chicago in August, would enjoy meeting cultured men, women, 35-45, liberals liking the out-of-doors, intelligent gossip, wholesome fun. Elaine.

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WHY BE LONELY? Box 434, Spokane, Washington. Enclose postage.

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ARTIST wants young male companion share auto trip Florida to Taos and (or) Denver about August 15th, return September 15th. Box 12, Sarasota, Florida.

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PHYSICIAN, age 34, Jew; vitally interested in music and books; located in small New England town; would like to correspond with college or professional woman of similar tastes. Box 602-A.

PERSONALS

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The Amen Corner

—"Lo, Seven, a chosen band
Towering above the host,
Harnessed and spear in hand,
At the Seven gates to stand,
Each at his lotted post!"

Mr. Gilbert Murray's verse translations of Greek drama have gained a unique place in English literature. Fourteen have been published by the Oxford University Press, before the newest one, *Æschylus: The Seven Against Thebes.*[1] "It is worth noting," writes the translator, "that the *Seven* does not deal with its story as a great world problem, as do all the other Aeschylean tragedies that have come down to us.... We have here merely the vivid and unforgettable picture of the population of the besieged city, and one clearly outlined individual character, the doomed warrior doing his duty to the last."

A modern tragedy in verse on a classical theme has also just been published by the Oxford Press, *King Minos of Knossos* by B. Cyril Windeler,[2] a poetical drama against the background of Minoan history opened up by the works of Sir Arthur Evans. It is now revealed that Mr. Windeler is the "W. Bernard," author of the volume of poems *Ballet Suite,*[3] published a year or two ago.

The most important addition recently made to the poetry shelf is the volume of 533 collected *Poems*[4] of W. H. Davies which the Oxford Press published in June, followed lately by a new volume of 51 *Love Poems.*[5]

Sir John Squire, the well-known critic, author, and former editor of *The London Mercury*, has written of W. H. Davies and his poetry:

"Mr. Davies was born in 1871 at Newport, Monmouthshire. He wandered, as a young man, across the Atlantic. He set out with a companion for Klondike, travelling as a stowaway on trains, missed his footing and lost a leg. He came back to England and South-East London, lived in common lodging-houses, peddled laces, and gradually accumulated enough money to publish a small volume of poems.

"Mr. Davies settled down as a writer; he wrote, assisted by a generous introduction from Mr. Bernard Shaw, *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp,* and his published volumes now number about fifty.

"Mr. Davies is astonished at everything that the rest of us take for granted. What to the rest of us is the first primrose of spring is to him the first primrose in all the world. In other words, he is pure poet.

"Pure poets are not in fashion. A school has arise which says that the sun, the moon, love, birds, green fields, and flowers have been overdone, and poetry ought to be written about other things. That school is wrong. 'Look in thy heart and write,' said Sir Philip Sidney; and the human heart does not change."

The Oxonian.

(1) $1.00. Write for complete list of Oxford translations, 114 Fifth Avenue. (2) $1.75. (3) $2.00. Import to order. (4) $3.00. (5) $1.25.

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE summer convention of the National Association of College Bookstores is being held at the Hotel St. Francis, San Francisco, July 31-August 3. Old Quercus sends greetings to the college booksellers, a live and most aspiring branch of the Trade. ☞Frances Steloff, of the Gotham Book Mart on 47th Street, pleases us very much by saying that her favorite liqueur is the romantic old Scottish elixir Drambuie, Bonnie Prince Charlie's special drench, always advertised as "A Link with the 45." Miss Steloff likes it because it reminds her of our own 45th Street, where the G. B. M. started business and where the *S. R. L.* works hard. Drambuie comes from the Island of Skye, and every bottle should be accompanied by a copy of Alexander Smith's *A Summer in Skye* or (easier to obtain) his exquisite *Dreamthorp.* ☞Will not someone invent a liqueur named Dreamthorp? ☞The coolest bookseller during hot weather is Philip Duschnes, who sends us a photo of himself bathing in a waterfall near Bruce Rogers's old mill in Connecticut. ☞R. B. writes from Palmerton, Pa., to recommend for vacation reading Erskine Childers: *The Riddle of the Sands* (Lauriat) and Weston Martyr: *Not Without Dust and Heat* (Ives Washburn). ☞We are pleased to see a letter from E. M. Forster, A. P. Herbert, A. A. Milne, J. B. Priestley, H. G. Wells (representing the National Council for Civil Liberties, London) protesting the prosecution (and £400 fine) of James Hanley's novel *Boy,* which occurred nearly 3½ years after the book had been published. They suggest, with good sense, a time-limit beyond which legal proceedings against a book cannot be instituted.

☞Old Q. was chuckling, during recent hot moist weather, at the idea of people making themselves uncomfortable going away on long tropical excursions, when right here on 45th Street we've had the most exemplary Bermuda weather. ☞Wearing his linen suit, autographed on the trouser buttons by the excellent firm of A. and F. Smith, Bermuda, and ducking the brief little showers, he went in to discuss with Mr. M'Killop, of John David, the perfect ingredients for a Planters Punch or a Rum Collins. ☞We always have confidence in a liquor store that employs Scotsmen. ☞Rambling in the sun, saw a truck of the Gordon Supply Co., "Coats, Aprons, Towels, Hoovers." What (in this connection) are *Hoovers?* ☞Very eager to see the one-volume Columbia Encyclopedia ("compassing human knowledge in 5 million words and 3 inches of shelf space") just completed (after 8 years' work) by the Columbia University Press. It is announced for October publication; price $15 until then, and $17.50 thereafter. The editor-in-chief is Dr. Clarke F. Ansley, formerly of the State University of Iowa. "The contents are uncolored by the private judgment or opinion of individuals," says President N. M. Butler. One interesting statement in the prospectus is that "there are no pictures and no paragraphs." The longest biography (2800 words) is that of Julius Cæsar. There are 16,783 biographical entries, of which 5,039 are American (does this mean U. S. A. or all the Americas?). Among living writers G. B. Shaw gets the longest entry, 400 words, the verbose old man. James Joyce gets 240, Edna Millay 200, Sinclair Lewis 150. Napoleon gets 1350 words, and Jesus 1200. ☞It sounds like a grand book; the C. U. P. runneth over. ☞Other good news for old Prowling Q., the "Federal Poetry Project"—a petition has been submitted in Congress for a grant of $500,000 "to promote and further the human and artistic resources of the nation in the field of poetry and literature." One section of the document proposes "to hire and engage poets of promise who are now on relief, on a salary not to exceed $40 per week and not to be less than $15 per week." "The Public Poetry Project," says the petition, "shall be authorized to use the Government property known as Mt. Weather at Blue Mount, Virginia, as a base of operations." That line is a poem in itself. Old Q. is retiring to his shack in the woods to versify. ☞The Harper Prize Novel of 1935 is *Honey in the Horn* by H. L. Davis. Award: $7,500. Judges: Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Canfield, Louis Bromfield. Publication date: August 22. It's a story of Oregon.

☞Answers have been many to M. B. W. of La Jolla, Calif., who asked (*Trade Winds,* July 13) for suggestions of books that "belong in the *treasure* class."

☞Cleveland, O. (unsigned) suggests *John Percyfield,* by C. Hanford Henderson; *A Journey to Nature,* by J. P. Mowbray.

☞M. S. H., Minneapolis, suggests *The Letters of Oscar Firkins,* also *The Bride of Quietness* (plays) by the same.

☞O. A. M., Roxbury, N. Y.: *Life's Minor Collisions* and *Groups and Couples,* both by Frances Lester Warner.

☞M. F. P., New Hartford, Conn.: *The Happy Hypocrite,* by Max Beerbohm; *Lustres,* by Ann and Dilwyn Parrish; *The Wind in the Willows,* by Kenneth Grahame; *Father Malachy's Miracle,* by Bruce Marshall; *The Forest Lovers,* by Maurice Hewlett.

☞S. F. of Boston sends in ten titles, viz.:—*Salah and His American,* L. Hall; *Memoirs of a Fox Hunting Man,* S. Sassoon; *Decline and Fall,* Evelyn Waugh; *Tortilla Flat,* John Steinbeck; *Superficial Journey through Japan,* Peter Quennell; *Viva Mexico,* Chas. M. Flandrau; *Rio Grande,* Harvey Fergusson; *Frolic Wind,* Richard Oke; *Reading at Random,* edited by Ben Ray Redman; *Saturday Night at the Grayhound,* by John Hampson.

☞Wolcott, Conn., suggests: *Twenty Years a-Growing,* by M. O'Sullivan; *The Cardinal's Snuff-Box,* by Henry Harland; *Lady into Fox,* by David Garnett; *The Flower Show,* by Denis Mackail; *Jonathan Papers,* by E. Woodbridge; *Peter Ibbetson,* by Du Maurier; *A Woman Rice Planter,* by Patience Pannington.

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